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ABSTRACT

Intended to help readers develop an appreciation of the contributions of Franco-Americans to the cultural heritage of the United States, this book, the fifth of six volumes, presents 18 chapters representing many perspectives--from the historical to the sociological--illustrating the thinking and feelings of those in the forefront of Franco-American studies. This volume focuses on Franco-Americans in Louisiana. The following readings are presented: "France and the Mississippi Valley: A Resume" (Louise Phelps Kellogg); "France and Louisiana in the Early Eighteenth Century" (Marcel Giraud); "Bienville's First Administration" (Charles Edward O'Neill); "Private Enterprise vs. Mercantilism: The Cadillac-Duclos Affair" (Carl A. Brasseaux); "The Superior Council in Colonial Louisiana" (James D. Hardy, Jr.); "The Development of Industries in Louisiana During the French Regime, 1673-1763" (Nancy M. Miller Surrey); "An Adventurous Voyage to French Colonial Louisiana: The Narrative of Mother Tranchepain, 1727" (Marion Ware); "The Establishment of a Colonist" (Antoine-Simon Le Page Du Pratz); "From African Captivity to American Slavery: The Introduction of Black Laborers to Colonial Louisiana" (Daniel H. Usner, Jr.); "The French and the Natchez Indians in Louisiana: 1700-1731" (Patricia D. Woods); "La Louisiane avant Vaudreuil" ("Louisiana before Vaudreuil," Guy Fregault) "New Orleans under French Rule" (Sarah Searight); "Les problemes d'installation des Acadiens en Louisiane au XVIIIe siecle" ("Settlement Problems of the Acadians in Louisiana in the 18th Century," Jacqueline Voorhies); "The New Orleans Revolution of 1768: A Reappraisal" (Richard Ira Matthews); "Some Eighteenth-Century French Views on Louisiana" (Pierre H. Boulle); "Louisiana as a Factor in French Diplomacy from 1762 to 1800" (Mildred Stahl Fletcher); "The World Aspects of the Louisiana Purchase (William M. Sloane); and "The Transfer" (Pierre-Clement de Laussat). (LH)

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A FRANCO-AMERICAN OVERVIEW

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Volume 5

A FRANCO-AMERICAN OVERVIEW

Volume 5

LOUISIANA

Compiled by
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INTRODUCTION

The French experience in Louisiana has been shaped by five principal groups--French-Canadians, French immigrants of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Acadian exiles, Santo Domingo refugees, and French-speaking blacks--each of whom has maintained some individual cultural traits from the colonial period to the present. The persistence of the groups' distinctive cultural traits was fostered and sustained by geographical isolation, racial boundaries, and class differences. Yet, each group had to make accommodations to its new environment and to the groups with which it had come into contact. As they interacted, they created a French-Louisiana culture which is distinctive, but not homogeneous.

The roots of this sociological phenomenon can be traced to the era of exploration and settlement. The exploration of the Mississippi Valley was undertaken primarily by French-Canadians, beginning with Marquette, Jolliet and La Salle. René Robert Cavelier de La Salle's voyage of discovery culminated with an act of possession which established French claims to the Mississippi Valley. The impact of French exploration upon the course of colonization of Louisiana is outlined in Louise Phelps Kellogg's «France and the Mississippi Valley: A Resumé.»

After claiming Louisiana for France, La Salle returned to the motherland to organize a colonizing expedition. La Salle's undertaking was plagued by misfortune from the outset. Forced to share his authority with the naval commander of the Louisiana-bound flotilla, La Salle, who was now suffering from severe paranoia, quarrelled constantly with his fellow officer. Moreover, the expedition missed the fog-enshrouded mouth of the Mississippi River and landed on the South Texas coast, where, abandoned by the now irate French naval commander, the colony was quickly decimated by disease, hostile Indians, and internal dissension.

The demise of La Salle's colony coincided with France's entrance into the War of the League of Augsburg which forestalled further colonization until 1698. France's interest in Louisiana, as Marcel Giraud relates in «France and Louisiana in the Early Eighteenth Century,» lay dormant for over a decade. It revived in 1698, when Jérome Phélypeaux, comte de Pontchartrain, selected Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, the «Canadian Cid,» to explore and colonize the lower Mississippi. Iberville established Fort Maurepas, near present-day Biloxi, Mississippi, and returned to France, leaving Ensign Sauvolle as acting governor of the fledgling colony. Sauvolle, however, soon succumbed to yellow fever, and Iberville's younger brother, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, took up the reins of government. This, the first of Bienville's four administrations, is treated meticulously in Charles Edward O'Neill's «Bienville's First Administration.»

Bienville's first administration was char-

acterized by arbitrary military rule, a regime reflecting Louisiana's position as a strategic military outpost. The governor's authority, however, was limited by that of the naval commissary, the prototype of the commissaire-ordonnateur, who, after 1712, shared the duties of government with the governor. Under this bi-polar governmental system, the chief executive functioned as the colony's chief military and diplomatic officer, while the commissaire-ordonnateur presided over the administration of police, finance, and civil affairs. Though separated in theory, in practice their functions frequently overlapped, thus precipitating continual intragovernmental feuds which were paralleled by feuds between religious orders.

Probably no feud was more bitter than the one which opposed governor Antoine Lamothe, dit Cadillac and ordonnateur Jean-Baptiste Du Bois Du Clos. The habitual quarrels over precedence and division of functions were compounded, in this case, by an economic rivalry. Cadillac, who represented the colony's proprietor, Antoine Crozat, and his Company, defended the monopolistic trade privileges the Crown had awarded the financier. Du Clos, an eighteenth-century wheeler-dealer, supported free enterprise, or at least his right to engage in profitable trade with the neighboring Spanish colonists. Their four-year struggle is recounted by Carl Brasseaux in «Private Enterprise v. Mercantilism: The Cadillac-Du Clos Affair.»

The military rule, which had characterized early Louisiana government, gave way to civil government in 1712 when King Louis XIV ceded the colony to Antoine Crozat. A new institution, the Superior Council, was established by letters patent to «decide in the last resort and without appeal, all contests, cases, and controversies. . .,» and to dispense civil and criminal justice. The functioning of this new institution is outlined in James D. Hardy, Jr., «The Superior Council in French Louisiana.»

A principal function of the Superior Council was the regulation of commerce which consisted primarily of timber, furs, and agricultural products. The development and evolution of the colonial economy is treated in Mrs. Nancy M. Miller Surrey's «The Development of Industries in Louisiana during the French Regime, 1673-1763.»

The growth of colonial Louisiana's agriculturally-based industries depended largely upon the availability of slave labor. The importation of black slaves, which began in 1719, provided the labor force to clear and cultivate the land, tasks which neither the Canadian voyageurs nor the French adventurers were prepared or willing to undertake. The colony's survival thus depended largely upon the labors of black bondsmen. The introduction of slavery had a profound social, cultural, and economic impact on colonial Louisiana, not the least of which was the creation of a distinctive black francophone culture, especially when hundreds of West Indian blacks were brought to Louisiana by their masters after the outset of the Santo Domingo revolution. Daniel H. Usner, Jr. examines their impact in «From African Captivity to American Slavery: The Introduction of Black Laborers to Colonial Louisiana.»

Slaves constituted an indispensable labor source for Louisiana's white settlers. Most of Louisiana's French frontiersmen were soldiers of fortune attracted to the colony between 1717 and 1721 by propaganda distributed by Louisiana's new proprietor, John Law's Company of the West, and its successor, the Company of the Indies. These companies, underwritten by hundreds of French stockholders, sought to make Louisiana profitable through large-scale colonization. In order to attract

large numbers of colonists to the Mississippi Valley. Law flooded France with propaganda depicting the colony as an earthly paradise, where crops grew spontaneously twice a year in an ever-balmy climate and where friendly Indians eagerly provided the French with foodstuffs and services. Nothing was said, however, about the Gulf Coast's oppressive humidity, ravenous mosquitoes, and general unfitness for European crops such as wheat and grapes. As a consequence, after a long and debilitating trans-Atlantic voyage, most French immigrants, usually urbanites, lacked the strength and technology for survival and died wretchedly on the sterile Gulf shores. The grim realities of eighteenth-century sea voyages is evoked in the narrative of Mother Tranchepain, an Ursuline assigned to Louisiana in 1727 to establish a school for girls and to supervise the royal hospital. The difficulties of establishing a farm in French Louisiana are recounted in Le Page du Pratz's «Establishment of a Colonist.»

The occupation of prime farmland by Frenchmen, such as Le Page du Pratz, precipitated a series of conflicts between settlers and Indians. The most significant Franco-Indian confrontation stemmed from one such land dispute in 1729, when the Natchez Indians, the most advanced of the lower Mississippi tribes, massacred French settlers and soldiers at Fort Rosalie. The series of confrontations leading to this uprising are examined by Patricia D. Woods in « The French and the Natchez Indians in Louisiana: 1700-1731.»

The Natchez Uprising, however, interrupted only temporarily French life in the Mississippi Valley, and in the ensuing years, Franco-Indian relations were peaceful. The bloody uprising nevertheless sounded the economic death knell for Louisiana's proprietor, the Company of the Indies, and, in 1731, the Crown resumed control of Louisiana. During the 1730's, the colony experienced a gradual expansion of agriculture and industry, and by 1742, when Pierre Rigaud Marquis de Vaudreuil was appointed governor, Louisiana had attained a small degree of prosperity. The general rise in the colonial standard of living is described in Guy Frégault's «La Louisiane avant Vaudreuil.»

Under Vaudreuil's administration, New Orleans, which had served as Louisiana's seat of government since 1718, became truly a colonial capital, with a court elegant enough to be called, with considerable exaggeration, a little Versailles. New Orleans' evolution from a backwater village to a bustling community is outlined in Sarah Searight's «New Orleans Under French Rule.»

New Orleans was the port of entry for all incoming supplies and immigrants. It is thus hardly surprising that, in 1765, the first large group of Acadians, whom the British had exiled from their Canadian homeland a decade earlier, disembarked at New Orleans. Between 1765 and 1785, approximately 3,000 Acadians sought refuge in Louisiana, and by 1810, they numbered 5,000 individuals. Moreover, in the nineteenth century, the Acadian population doubled in size every twenty years so that they now constitute Louisiana's largest francophone group. Their tightly-knit family system and stubborn attachment to their folkways enabled them to preserve their cultural identity into the twentieth century. In the eighteenth century, however, these same traits created problems as French and Spanish governors tried to scatter the exiles among strategic locations. The conflicts between Acadians and colonial administrators are recounted in Jacqueline K. Voorhies' «Les Problèmes d'installation des Acadiens en Louisiane.»

When the Acadians arrived in Louisiana, the colony was no longer French. Through the

Treaty of Fontainebleau (1762), Louisiana west of the Mississippi River had become a Spanish possession. The first Spanish governor, Antonio de Ulloa, however, did not reach New Orleans until March, 1766. Uncertainty arising from the four-year interim period, as well as Ulloa's refusal to take possession of the colony at New Orleans, precipitated in October, 1768, the first armed uprising against a European imperial power. The Rebellion of 1768 is discussed in Preston Moore's «The Good Wine of Bordeaux.»

The rebels' success was short-lived. in 1770, conde Alejandro O'Reilly led a 2,000-man occupation force to New Orleans and quickly restored the colony to Spanish rule. In order to prevent further agitation, he ordered the executions of five rebel leaders--the so-called Louisiana martyrs--thereby gaining the appellation «Bloody O'Reilly.» The French Crown's refusal to interfere either in the rebellion or its aftermath should not be interpreted as lack of interest in the colony, but as Pierre Boulle's «Some Eighteenth-Century Views on Louisiana» demonstrates, widespread interest existed among the intellectual elite. As Mildred Stahl Fletcher points out in «Louisiana as a Factor in French Diplomacy from 1763 to 1800,» this interest persisted throughout the late eighteenth century though France was more interested in preserving the balance of power in America than with regaining the lost colony.

France's position regarding Louisiana shifted dramatically in the 1790's, and on October 1, 1800, Spain retroceded Louisiana to France through the Treaty of San Ildefonso after a long period of negotiations. By regaining Louisiana, Napoleonic France hoped to establish a French North American empire.

Americans residing in the New West, beyond the Appalachian Mountains, however, were horrified by the appearance of a potentially strong French military presence in the Mississippi Valley. Of particular concern to them was the right of deposit at New Orleans, a privilege guaranteed to them through the Treaty of San Lorenzo (Pinckney's Treaty) of 1795. As the Crescent City served as the principal outlet for their goods, the Westerners brought pressure to bear upon the American government for a diplomatic or, if necessary, a military resolution of the problem. Consequently, President Thomas Jefferson instructed America's ambassador to France, Robert Livingston, to enter negotiations for the purchase of the Isle of Orleans.

Meanwhile, political developments in Europe as well as the successful slave uprising in Santo Domingo forced Napoleon to abandon his imperial designs, and thus the French government was not only amenable to American proposals, but offered to sell all of Louisiana. In May, 1803, a treaty of cession was signed in Paris by American and French representatives. The Louisiana Purchase is placed within the context of world diplomacy, and its impact upon American history is treated by William M. Sloane in «The World Aspects of the Louisiana Purchase.»

The actual transfer of the colony to the United States took place on December 20, 1803, only thirty days after French colonial prefect Pierre-Clement Laussat had received Louisiana for the French government. In his memoirs, Laussat relates the emotional ceremony in the course of which the French tricolor was replaced by the stars and stripes.

Although Louisiana had become a de facto American possession, it remained profoundly French. In late 1803, for example, Claiborne informed Laussat that «The people of Louisiana love France dearly; I get proofs of it all the time.» A more accurate

observation would have been, «Louisianians love their French identity,» and during the nineteenth century, Louisiana's five major French groups would retain and transform their diverse heritages into a distinctive and persistent culture.

Mathé Allain
Carl A. Brasseaux

FRANCE AND THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY: A RESUME

By Louise Phelps Kellogg

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, France had the most magnificent opportunity that has ever been offered to a colonizing power. The Mississippi Valley lay open for occupation and exploitation. Nowhere else in the world is there such a valley; extending through twenty degrees of latitude with all the climates of the temperate zone, protected by high mountain ranges on the east and west, drained by the longest river in the world, the Mississippi Valley was a prize worthy of struggle and sacrifice. As Mark Twain in his introduction to *Life on the Mississippi* states: «The *basin of the Mississippi is the* BODY OF THE NATION»; it covers 1,250,000 square miles and is the second in the world. It draws its water supply from twenty-eight states and territories, extends through forty-five degrees of longitude, and has fifty-four subordinate navigable rivers.

France's discovery of the Mississippi River has often been rehearsed and questioned. Was France the real discoverer or does the credit belong to others? Spanish reports more than a century before France reached the valley revealed the existence of a great river in the heart of the continent, which their explorers had crossed midway in its course. So little had they appreciated the importance of their discovery that Spanish maps of the period show a mountain barrier crossing the valley about where the great tributaries of the Ohio and the Missouri sweep in. From this mountain range, a short stream issues leading to the Gulf of Mexico. Thus the Spanish knew nothing of the upper waters of the valley, and had no knowledge of the extent of the river they had seen.

The French, on the other hand, discovered the Mississippi from the north. Settled on the lower St. Lawrence, they quickly traced that river to its source in the great fresh-water lakes of the continent—the «sweet seas» as they called them on early French maps. When French traders and missionaries followed their explorers to the northernmost of these lakes, they met there several tribes of Indians who spoke of a great river beyond the lake. The French hoped that this river would lead them *through* the continent to the western ocean. It was surmised that this might be the river the Spanish explorers had reported flowing into the Gulf of California. That North America might be pierced from east to west was the hope of the official exploring party sent out to locate the great river of which the Indians had spoken.

Under this misapprehension, Louis Jolliet and his priest companion, Jacques Marquette started in 1673 to discover the Mississippi. It was thus a distinct disappointment for France when these explorers returned with the report that the river they had found ran south and

that they had followed it far enough to make it certain that this great central river of the continent drained into the Gulf of Mexico, then surrounded by the colonies of Spain. The only possible route to the western ocean might be found by mounting the western tributary, the Missouri. This, however, would be a long and arduous voyage upstream against its mighty current. Nor was it certain that this tributary headed near the western ocean.

Notwithstanding the disappointment regarding the course of the river he had discovered, Jolliet's account of the region he had traversed made a profound impression both in Canada and France as was evidenced in the letter he wrote to Governor Frontenac:

> It is with much joy that I have the good fortune today to present to you this map, which will make known to you the location of the rivers and lakes which one navigates across Canada or North America, more than 1,200 leagues from east to west...The great river...having been discovered in these last years 1673 and 1674 in consequence of the orders you gave me...passes between Florida and Mexico to empty into the sea, crossing the most beautiful country that has ever been seen. I have never, even in France, seen anything more beautiful than the prairies I have admired there, nothing could be more pleasing than the variety of groves and forests, where one may gather plums, apples, pomegranates, lemons, mulberries, and other small fruits not known in Europe. There are quail in the fields and brilliant parrots in the woods;in the river, one catches wondrous fish, hitherto unknown. Iron mines and copper, slate, saltpeter, coal, marble, and sandstones are abundant. The buffalo go in herds, some of them four hundred in number; wild turkeys are so common that they are not valued. The Indians raise three crops of maize a year and refreshing watermelons.[1]

And again Jolliet declares, «A settler would not there spend ten years in cutting down and burning the trees; on the very day of his arrival, he could put his plow into the ground... After sowing grain of all kinds, he might devote himself especially to planting the vine, and grafting fruit-trees; to dressing ox-hides, wherewith to make shoes; and with the wool of these oxen, he could make cloth, much finer than most of that which we bring from France.»[2]

This enthusiastic enumeration by the discoverer of the resources of the great interior valley appealed to the imagination of the France of Louis XIV. Colonization was in the air. The domains of the great king had been widened both in Europe and America. Two years before Jolliet's voyage, the colonial authorities had staged a pageant at the head of the Great Lakes, wherein with feudal pomp and ceremony calculated to impress the watching Indian chiefs of fourteen great tribes, it was declared that there was annexed to the kingdom of Louis XIV not only all the region of the Great Lakes, but also «all other countries, rivers, lakes...those discovered and to be discovered, bounded on one side by the Northern and Western seas, and on the other by the South, this land in all its length and breadth.»

By this act, France gave notice to the world that the interior of North America was to become French, and that it intended to annex the great central valley of the continent. After Jolliet's voyage, that claim was buttressed by discovery.

It fell to Frontenac's part to begin the development of this new colonial possession. The governor of Canada was a man of imperial vision and he chose to cooperate with him in

this work, another man of vision, Robert Cavelier de La Salle. Five years after Jolliet's enthusiastic report of the possibilities of colonization in the Mississippi Valley, La Salle was on his way around the lakes to begin a settlement therein and to lay plans for its permanent occupation. La Salle chose for his purpose the tributary valley of the Illinois River, which he named the Divine. From this base, he explored the Mississippi to its mouth and there on April 9, 1682, he staged a second ceremony of possession, annexing the valley of the river he had explored, with the consent of the tribes bordering on its banks, to the crown of Louis XIV, in whose honor he gave it the name of *La Louisiane*.

It was on his return from this voyage of exploration that La Salle and his lieutenant, Henry de Tonty, inaugurated a policy which was to have portentous results both for the geography of the valley and for the future of French power therein. At his new fort on the upper Illinois, La Salle concentrated the Indian tribes from a large area, enticing them by means of presents and promises of trade. There under the battlements of Fort St. Louis were clustered villages of Miami and Illinois from the vicinity, Mascouten and Kickapoo from the Wisconsin River, Shawnee from the South, and even Abenaki and Mohican from the far East. As Parkman describes it: «La Salle looked down from his rock on a concourse of wild human life. Lodges of bark and rushes, or cabins of logs, were clustered on the open plain or along the edges of the bordering forests. Squaws labored, warriors lounged in the sun, naked children whooped and gambolled on the grass. Beyond the river . . . the banks were studded once more with the lodges of the Illinois.»[3]

The first problem faced by any colonizing power is what to do with the native inhabitants—how may they be conciliated and assimilated? Shall they be incorporated into the body politic of the colony or shall they be driven from their habitats by guile or force? We have long heard that the French were more successful with the North American natives than either of their rivals, the Spanish or the English. French experience in the Mississippi Valley, continuing La Salle's policy of migration and concentration, does not prove the truth of this assertion.

At the time of the French discovery, there were probably about two hundred thousand Indians settled at various favored spots throughout the length and breadth of the valley. Through the dim mists of prehistory, by means of the science of archeology, we may catch glimpses of primitive life in this region, of wars and migrations, of great buildings and fortifications. Huge remains present themselves to the curious: on the river bottom opposite St. Louis, loom the Cahokia mounds as yet unassigned to any known tribe of builders. In Ohio and Wisconsin, Fort Ancient and Aztalan offer their problem of fortifications by whom, why, and when. Everywhere throughout the valley are scattered mounds and enclosures speaking of primitive man and his works, the authorship of which the science of archeology has not yet ascertained. Yet when the French came, there were certain well-defined areas of native occupation; many sedentary tribes with rudiments of agriculture and an indigenous culture spread a thin veneer of population over the entire valley.

The coming of the white man changed the habits and customs of Indians. French traders speedily taught them to forget their native economy and to become dependent upon white men's goods for the necessities of existence. White men's firearms, with their requirements of powder and lead, were necessary for the hunt; only by obtaining sufficient pelts from fur-bearing animals could the red

man supply his needs and wants. Assiduous hunting drove the game farther into the forests or onto the edges of the plains and prairies. Red hunters were forced to range farther and farther from their villages and thus become a more migratory and a less sedentary people.

It was, however, the French official policy of segregation that most completely changed the Indian geography of the Mississippi Valley. In searching for the earliest local or state history, historical students in all the valley states should study this policy of the French officials during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century to account for the location and movements of the Indian tribes and their relations to the early white settlements. To take an example from the region close at hand: the Shawnee are known to have lived in prehistoric times in the bluegrass region of Kentucky; they seem to have been there when Jolliet went down the river in 1673. La Salle attracted certain of their groups to his post in Illinois; Shawnee were with La Salle and his company when they found the mouth of the Mississippi. Thus accustomed to white men's leadership, certain groups of Shawnee later accompanied French deserters towards the English colonies on the eastern seaboard. They finally came back to central Ohio in order to be near the French traders at Detroit, thus leaving Kentucky open for late eighteenth century settlement, but proving dangerous neighbors until after Wayne's victory and their migration west of the Mississippi. Similar studies of tribal movements in connection with concentration near French posts will, in nearly every state of the Mississippi Valley, serve to explain and illustrate the earliest phases of its history.

La Salle's dream of empire comprised the entire valley. To command it, he proposed to form a colony at the Mississippi's mouth and thence to control and develop the valley as an outpost of France in the New World. Louis XIV was convinced of the opportunity offered by the American explorer and furnished him with ships, settlers, and goods to begin the colonization of Louisiana. La Salle set sail from France in 1684 for the Gulf of Mexico. By some fatality he missed the river's mouth and, continuing westward, placed his ill-fated colony on the coast of Texas. Thence he set forth endeavoring to find the river he had missed, only to be struck down in mid-journey by an assassin's bullet. After his departure, his colony on the coast fell into ruin, the settlers died of starvation or were killed by hostile Indians. The first attempt of France to colonize the Mississippi Valley was a failure.

Meanwhile Canada was growing strong and vigorous; its sons ranged the seas, did battle with English rivals in the great northern Hudson Bay, and by land penetrated farther and farther into the continent, building waterside forts, planting missions, ranging the forests in the upper part of the Mississippi Valley bordering on the Great Lakes.

In 1697, when Louis XIV had obtained a truce with his enemies, he turned his thoughts to the reoccupation of his name colony, Louisiana, and the planting of a stake at the mouth of the Mississippi. The agent he chose for this purpose was a Canadian colonist who had served him well and faithfully in the navy he was building to offset the sea power of Great Britain. Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, has been called the first great Canadian. Certainly the accounts of his dauntless courage and invincible prowess in his sea fights in Hudson Bay, read like the combats of Vikings of old.

Iberville, who dreamed of a continent for France, was deprived of the fruits of his victories in Hudson Bay by the diplomats who drew up the Treaty of Ryswick. In requital, he prepared to carry his rivalry to a southern region and, in the last year of the seventeenth centu-

ry, planted at the behest of his sovereign a permanent settlement near the mouth of the Mississippi. The colony of Louisiana took its place on the world map.

Iberville did not live to develop the colony he had begun. Stricken with yellow fever, he died at Havana in 1706, leaving his unfinished task to his younger brother, Bienville. Bienville took up his opportunity with good will and ability. For a third of a century, he strove to develop Louisiana and to unite it with the older French colony on the St. Lawrence. He visioned a France in America stretching through the vast arc of occupation composed of the two great valleys of the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence. With one end of the arc resting on Quebec and the other on New Orleans, Bienville and his compeers planned a French power in America, which would confine the English colonies to the Cis-Allegheny region and give to France the heart of North America.

France's occupation of the Mississippi Valley did not occur without awakening alarm among other colonizing powers. When La Salle landed on the coast of Texas, Spanish officials in Mexico regarded this occupation with dark forebodings. Expeditions were sent out to watch proceedings and it was a Spanish captain that reported the ruin of La Salle's colony on Lavaca Bay by starvation and hostile Indians. Successive expeditions visited the vicinity the following years to see that the French did not return.[4]

France, at this time, had a population outnumbering that of the British Isles in the ratio of five to two. Both its military and naval forces were superior to those of any other kingdom in Europe. The British saw that the addition of the Mississippi Valley to French possessions would be a calamity. «Should the French settle at the disemboguing of the river Meschasipe,» wrote an English publicist of the time, «they would not be long before they made themselves masters of that rich province, which would be an addition to their strength very terrible to Europe.»[5]

An English company of Carolina, in an effort to forestall the French, sent out in 1698 a naval captain named Bond to make a reconnaissance of the mouth of the Mississippi. Bond wintered at Charleston and, early in 1699, sailed for the Gulf of Mexico and ascended the river for some miles. He soon met Bienville in a canoe coming down from an exploring expedition upstream. The French youth boarded the English intruder and boldly told her captain that he was trespassing on the territory now owned by Louis XIV. Bond thereupon quietly retreated, leaving to the bend in the river where he met his adversary, the picturesque name «Détour aux Anglais» (English Turn).[6]

English rivalry, however, was not so easily turned aside. Traders from Charleston encouraged by their governor and other officials, threaded the wilderness hinterland of Carolina and made every effort to reclaim the natives from French influence. The shrewd tribesmen played off the rivals for their favor to their own advantage, frequently to the disadvantage of both their British and French suzerains.[7]

Although the founders of Louisiana made every effort to conciliate the natives and to win their friendship, they did not intend to base the prosperity of their new colony on the returns of the fur trade nor, as had been done in Canada, to train the French residents for life in the woods. Furs came down the Mississippi from its upper waters in increasing numbers as western Canada learned of the French occupation. With them came a number of early traders and *coureurs de bois*, some of whom like Henry de Tonty were very useful

to the infant colony in forming Indian alliances. Others like Pierre le Sueur, who, in 1700, mounted the Mississippi in a sailing vessel, came back with reports of mines and of the resources of the upper river. Iberville and Bienville, however, planned to develop agriculture in order to furnish France with products not to be grown on its soil, such as tobacco, indigo, and silk. Rice was one of the first crops grown and it flourished amazingly; most of the harvest was used in Louisiana, especially after African slaves began to be imported in considerable numbers. Tobacco and indigo became standard crops, but the culture of silk for some reason did not flourish. Cotton was introduced somewhat later and large crops were grown, but due to the difficulty of separating the fibre and seed, but little was fit for export.[8] Wheat was attempted in the early years and a grist mill was erected, but this grain did not flourish. At a time of scarcity in 1710, a messenger was sent up the Mississippi to keep the Canadians trading on the upper river from coming to the lower colony lest by their presence the scarcity be increased. Aid was also obtained on occasions from the Spanish at Pensacola or the West Indies. Later, flour for the colonists on the lower river was sent from the Illinois settlements, where a considerable harvest of grain was raised by the retired traders and *coureurs de bois*, who made up these settlements.

The Illinois was not a colony planned like Louisiana, although it began about the same time. It was an outgrowth of Canada and all its settlers considered themselves Canadians dwelling in the West. Its commercial relations were with Montreal until after New Orleans was founded. In 1717, an ordinance was passed making Illinois part of the colony of Louisiana. In 1731, it was officially debated whether Illinois should thereafter be administered by New France or Louisiana. The governors of both colonies were asked to give an opinion thereon, each naturally making a plea for his own province. It was finally decided not to disturb the existing connection between Illinois and Louisiana. Nevertheless, even after Louisiana became a royal province, its northern and eastern boundaries were not closely defined. Canada claimed all the region of the Great Lakes and the upper Mississippi. The portage routes through Wisconsin and Illinois were in the Canadian sphere of influence. On the other hand, the French colony on the lower Wabash, named Vincennes for its founder, was a part of Louisiana. The boundary between the two provinces ran from the mouth of the Illinois eastward to the Wabash about on the fortieth degree of latitude. West of the Mississippi, little attempt was made to distinguish Canada from Louisiana. The posts on the Missouri were administered from New Orleans; those in Minnesota and farther north were officered from Canada. Nevertheless, although there were two French colonies dividing the great central valley, the autocratic methods of French administration and control, centered in the mother country, gave a unity of design to the French occupation of the Mississippi Valley, even while upper Canada depended on the fur trade for prosperity, and Louisiana with Illinois tended towards an agricultural growth with mining and Indian trade as subsidiary industries.

At the time Iberville, in the south, was laying the foundations of Louisiana, Canada was preparing to establish an outpost at the eastern edge of the valley as a barrier against English penetration. During the latter decades of the seventeenth century, Dutch and English traders had, several times, sent out trading expeditions to the upper Great Lakes, which were turned back with difficulty by the enterprising French entrepreneurs of the West. With the founding of Detroit on the strait uniting the upper and lower lakes, English fur-trading flotillas ceased to attempt

the western fur trade.

At Detroit, as at La Salle's post on the Illinois, concentration and assimilation of the Indian tribes were planned on a large scale. It was even expected that these subsidiary villages would become French-speaking and gradually adopt French customs and manners. The missionaries in the West bitterly complained of this policy for their neophytes, alleging they were being debauched rather than civilized by white contact. Among the tribes which were invited to remove and settle near Detroit were the Outagami of Wisconsin, called «Reynards» by the French because of their foxlike ways. The Fox Indians were not good material from which to make French colonials. Proud and intensely conservative, they clung passionately to the ways of the wilderness and refused to assimilate or to yield to French tutelage. It was not long before they were embroiled with their protectors, and when they attempted to retreat from Detroit, a rash commandant followed and gave battle in which a large number of the Foxes were killed. Revenge is an ethical duty among the red men and all the relatives and allies of the victims gathered to oppose the French power Thus began the series of Fox wars which lasted for three decades, involved Canada in long and expensive military expeditions, and almost cost France the possession of the upper Great Lakes and the upper Mississippi. Thus the policy of concentration and assimilation of the native inhabitants was checked in western Canada because of the intractable character of certain of the aborigines.

Before the close of the Fox wars, the French of Louisiana were involved in a still more serious difficulty with the native tribes. This is not the time or place to enlarge upon the era of speculation in France which opened Louisiana to settlement. It is enough to say that the colony's lands were cut up into great concessions, which soon began to be peopled with European emigrants in considerable numbers. Unlike Canada to which the immigration was almost wholly French, Louisiana was settled by congeries of folk imported from several European countries. The large concessionnaires advertised for settlers in several countries of central Europe, and the King's ships brought overseas Germans, Swiss, dwellers in the Low Countries, as well as the poor and destitute from many of the provinces of France. Charlevoix, who descended the Mississippi in the winter of 1721-22, mentions a number of these groups living on the concessions of the nobles. John Law had planned to settle on his tract on the Arkansas nine thousand Palatines; in reality, only about two hundred and fifty German colonists actually arrived.[9] At the Natchez, a considerable group, many of whom were artisans such as coopers, masons, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, and cabinet makers,[10] occupied a territory which Charlevoix called «the finest, most fertile and best peopled of all Louisiana.» The early emigrants to Louisiana yet await their historian; it is, however, certain from the glimpses derived of the early settlements along the Mississippi from New Orleans to Arkansas that here was fine material for colonial development, and that but for the policy which brought about Indian wars and massacres, Louisiana might have been strong enough to have resisted foreign attacks and to have maintained a French population on both sides of the Mississippi from the Ohio to the lower courses of the stream.

The Natchez wars began not like the Fox wars because of deportation, but from fear of such a policy. D'Artaguette wrote to the ministry that the Natchez «having information that the French wished to force them to abandon their villages and their lands» struck the resident French in their neighborhood on November 28, 1729, and in a few hours had

killed nearly two hundred and fifty men and taken the women, children, and negro slaves prisoners.[11] The entire colony was threatened with extinction, since there was a conspiracy of many of the tribes of whom the Natchez struck first. Only the Choctaw stood firm for their French allies and by their aid, the Natchez and the Yazoo, who had joined them, were driven from their habitats and took refuge with the Chickasaw on the lands east of the Mississippi. For two decades and more, a series of wars and campaigns followed, each more futile and disastrous than the last. The Indians of the upper valley were drawn into this conflict, and in 1739, a large contingent came from the St. Lawrence Valley by way of the Ohio River and wintered where Memphis now stands, where they were joined by a well-equipped French force from New Orleans. And yet the French murdered in 1729 remained unavenged.

An effort was made by contemporary chroniclers and officials to make it appear that the English instigated these revolts against the Louisiana colonists. There is no doubt that English traders took advantage of the situation to increase their gains, but that the revolts were primarily due to English suggestion cannot be proved. It appears that in the South as in the North, the French Indian policy was unsuccessful with the North American natives and that the colonies occupying the Mississippi Valley were weakened more by assaults from within than by rivalry from without.

The intercolonial wars, which began anew in 1744, were in the nature of a relief from rather than an accentuation of the Indian troubles. The tribesmen were enlisted in the struggle with rival colonial powers, and their disaffection was skillfully turned by the French against the traders and outlying settlements of the English. Nonetheless so far had the disintegration gone, that, in 1747, at the very height of the struggle known as King George's War, a conspiracy involving all the tribes around Detroit nearly succeeded in capturing that strong post and led to a secession of French-allied Indians, who carried their trade to the English in dangerous proximity to the French posts. Even the Illinois Indians who had long been faithful to French interests were suspected and the conspiracy took on a dangerous aspect, since should the Illinois forts fall, the connecting link between Canada and Louisiana would be broken. «During the closing years of the war, their whole fabric of alliances, so long their special pride,» wrote Alvord, «fell to pieces; and they faced the calamity of defeat at the hands of their former friends (the Indians).»[12]

The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 did not put an end to the hostilities between the two rivals; it but introduced a breathing spell wherein both parties to the struggle girded themselves for what proved to be a final effort on the part of the French to hold their colonies in the New World. During the French and Indian War, known in Europe as the Seven Years' War, only the extreme eastern border of the Mississippi Valley was a battleground. The upper valley, known as upper Canada, was involved only in sending contingents of Indians to fight farther east, and in releasing the garrisons of some of its posts to recruit the armies under Montcalm. Thus the forts on the upper Mississippi were abandoned by 1756; those about the Great Lakes, at Detroit, Mackinac, and La Baye were garrisoned until the close of the war. When the last struggle took place at Montreal in the summer of 1760, all of upper Canada was included in the capitulation made by Governor Vaudreuil to the British General Amherst. Louisiana's share in the struggle was to furnish supplies; from Illinois and the posts on the Wabash, flour and other provisions were

shipped up the Ohio to the beleaguered forts. Fort Massiac on the Ohio was built in 1757 to further these shipments and to act as a protection to the lower river should any expedition come that way. Louisiana proper was involved only by having its supply ships cut off by English frigates and by a constant fear of a British fleet appearing in the waters of the Gulf.

It seemed for a time, even after the loss of Canada, that Louisiana would be retained by France. The Duc de Choiseul, France's foreign minister, planned in 1759 to form a commercial company in upper Louisiana to serve as a refuge for retiring Canadians. He suggested that the capital for this new colony should be placed where the Miami River falls into the Ohio, thus anticipating by thirty years a plan for a city where Cincinnati now stands.[13] After the capitulation of Canada, several prominent persons escaped thence to France by way of the Mississippi and New Orleans, notably the famous Abbé Picquet, who had mustered the Indians of northern New York to the aid of France. The garrisons, also, of Mackinac and La Baye retreated by way of the Fox-Wisconsin to the Mississippi, hoping to reinforce Illinois and to hold that region for France.[14] But it was not to be. The two years following the fall of Canada were increasingly disastrous to French forces both on the continent of Europe and on the high seas. When the treaty of peace was drawn, France was too exhausted to resist any demands for cession. Moreover as a continental power, its first duty was to preserve its territory in Europe. Colonies overseas might be won or lost. France in Europe must be saved. The English diplomats inexorably demanded that the Mississippi from its source to the River Iberville should become the western boundary of its North American colonies. Thus in order to obtain peace, eastern Louisiana as well as Canada was tossed into the scale. Then to compensate its ally Spain, whom France had drawn into the war and who had suffered severely, western Louisiana with New Orleans was ceded to that power. France in the Mississippi Valley was no more.

In all probability, France at that time was relieved to be rid of the burden of the colony of Louisiana. As a recent writer in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* has said, «France had given Louisiana to Spain in 1763 without reluctance and Spain had received it without enthusiasm.»[15] Louisiana had always been a liability rather than an asset to France. Crozat is said to have buried there several millions of livres in his short attempt to develop this region; the Company of the Indies had dropped twenty million livres in this wilderness; on it as a royal province, France had expended from forty to fifty million livres in the vain effort to produce a self-supporting community. However humbling it was to the pride of the French people to lose so great a colony, as a means of immediate relief the cession of Louisiana was a necessity. Fraud and peculation such as had destroyed Canada were not so marked in Louisiana; yet dependence upon the home government for the very means of existence was a characteristic of its entire history. Autocratic control had weakened self-help. Indian policy had led to rebellions and uprisings that had discouraged immigration. There were not enough colonists in the valley to hold this vast region for France. French visions of a great empire in the Mississippi Valley were dissipated by the practical exigencies of the situation. France failing to develop and people the great valley perforce lost it.

France's attitude towards its former North American possessions, during the four decades that followed the treaty of 1763, has been a moot question. It was for a long time believed and asserted that French assis-

tance to England's rebellious colonies in America was based on a hope to recover its own colonies so lately lost, and the American commissioners to Paris were instructed to secure an unequivocal pledge that the «most Christian King» should «never invade or attempt to possess Nova Scotia, Acadia, Canada, Florida, or any other part of North America.» Recent studies of the diplomatic negotiations go to show that, in its alliance with the United States during the American Revolution, France was actuated by a desire to humiliate its rival, Great Britain, and to restore its lost prestige in Europe, but not to recover Canada or Louisiana.[16] Ambition in that direction seems to have waned.

Although France claimed for itself no territory in North America, French aid enabled the colonies to make good their demand for the Mississippi as a boundary. Just as Colonel George Rogers Clark left Corn Island opposite Louisville on his expedition to capture the Illinois, he received from Pittsburgh a letter announcing the good news of the signing of the French treaties. «The 26th of May last (1778) we Celebrated the Joyfull News here,» wrote Clark's correspondent, «with the Discharge of Thirteen Pieces of Canon and a Tripple discharge of Musquetry.»[17] This news was of infinite value to Clark in his dealings with the French inhabitants of Illinois and in his negotiations with the western Indians. Without the French companies enrolled at Cahokia and Kaskaskia, Clark would never have made his successful march on Vincennes, nor have captured the British fort and garrison there. The memory of old France was still dear to its former subjects in the Mississippi Valley and the commands of the French king armed their assistance to the Virginians.

A similar situation occurred in New Orleans, whence the Spanish governor set forth on a successful raid upon the British posts above that city on the Mississippi River. Governor Galvez desired to distinguish himself on behalf of Spain, which was planning to acquire Eastern Louisiana. But the militia who accompanied him were for the most part French-bred and trained and Galvez's brilliant campaigns were largely carried through by French aid. Even the Indians of the Mississsippi Valley were told that «The great Sperit . . . caused your old Father the French King and other Great Nations to Joyn the Big knife (the Americans) and fight with them against all their Enemies so that the English is become like a Dear in the Woods.»[18] Without the backing of France and the help of the French inhabitants in the West, it is doubtful whether the Americans could have been successful in the Northwest or the Spanish in the Southwest during the American Revolution.

After the close of the American Revolution, France moved rapidly towards its own revolution and overseas colonization dropped out of sight until its house was set in order. After the outburst of energy released by the revolutionary activities, France remembered that it had once shared a large portion of the North American continent and planned to establish there a sister republic of French origin to be free and yet allied with the French republic in Europe. Jefferson described France's plan for the Mississippi Valley as «an independent state connected in commerce with France and the United States.» In order to accomplish this result, it would be necessary to seize New Orleans and to drive the Spanish from Louisiana. For this object, General George Rogers Clark offered his services to revolutionary France and Citizen Genêt was sent to aid in arousing the western frontiersmen. Jefferson was sympathic until he discovered that the filibustering expedition was to be organized in the United States for an attack upon a power at peace with our nation. Then he quickly issued a proclamation forbidding the gathering

of troops. A shift of parties in France at that time caused Louisiana to be forgotten.[19]

The charms and the value of this lost province were recalled to France as the decade progressed by the many French travellers, most of them exiles, who visited North America in the last years of the eighteenth century. Among these travellers was the famous ex-priest Talleyrand, who, in 1797, was called to the foreign office under the consular régime. Talleyrand reminded the First Consul, Bonaparte, that France had once been a great power in North America and awoke in that ambitious, restless ruler a desire to reestablish a French empire there with Louisiana for a basis. Public sentiment in France was aroused about the same time by the publication of Chateaubriand's prose poem, *Atala*, which in moving language recited the beauties of the Mississippi Valley and recalled the earlier French occupation. Although a romantic and unreal description, it aroused the hope of France that this idyllic region might once more be its own.

Meanwhile, Bonaparte secretly obtained the retrocession of Spanish Louisiana. By pressure upon the foreign minister of Spain and by a promise of additional territory in Italy, the First Consul secured the treaty of San Ildefonso, signed October first, 1800, ceding Louisiana. All things portended the speedy recovery by France of an empire in North America.

This treaty, however, was to be kept a profound secret until Bonaparte was ready to send an expedition to take possession of New Orleans. The news, nevertheless, reached the United States in the spring of 1801 and caused Jefferson, then just inaugurated president, profound disquietude. He determined to send Monroe as envoy extraordinary to France to attempt to purchase New Orleans of the First Consul. Certain of Jefferson's French friends quietly interceded with the French government for generous treatment of the United States.[20]

The facts concerning the Louisiana Purchase are too well-known to need more than a brief recapitulation. Before Monroe's arrival, Talleyrand had approached Livingston, the United States representative in Paris, with an offer to sell the entire province. Livingston considered that he was not authorized to accept such an offer, but upon Monroe's arrival, Bonaparte sent a messenger to him with a similar offer. The *volte face* was due to a probability of renewal of the war with England, whose naval supremacy would make it impossible for France to protect Louisiana. Taking his courage in both hands, Monroe accepted the French offer and on April 30, 1803, the treaty of cession was signed. Jefferson, the strict constructionist, could not forbear to seize the opportunity to make the United States a world power by extending its territory over the Mississippi Valley, which at last entered upon its destiny as a part of the republic of the West.

It only remains to note what legacy France has left to the modern Mississippi Valley. Three of its largest cities, Detroit, St. Louis, and New Orleans, bear French names, and the last of these still cherishes its French origins and retains not only the buildings, but somewhat of the language and culture of France. Detroit and St. Louis, until recent times, based their social life upon the residents of French descent. Still surviving in parts of Wisconsin, Michigan, and Illinois, as well as in Louisiana and its neighboring states are small groups of descendants of the early French settlers, most of whom have become so mingled either with Indians or with incoming Americans as to be indistinguishable in culture or attainments. For example, one recent

United States senator from Wisconsin was of native Indian, original French, and immigrant German ancestry in almost equal proportions.

The map of the Mississippi Valley is perhaps the most eloquent testimony of its French beginnings. To mention only a few geographical names: we have Baton Rouge, Beauregard, Feliciana, in Louisiana; St. Francis in Arkansas; St. Genevieve and Cape Girardeau in Missouri; Dubuque and Des Moines in Iowa; Duluth, Le Sueur, and Faribault as well as St. Anthony Falls in Minnesota; Pierre in South Dakota. In Wisconsin, fourteen counties bear French names, while Superior, Racine, La Crosse, Eau Claire, and Fond du Lac are American cities with French origins. Michigan reminds one that Sault Ste. Marie, Charlevoix, Grosse Point, Marquette, and Calumet recall the French period; Indiana with La Porte, Terre Haute, and Vincennes has many French memories. Louisville and Bourbon County in Kentucky remind us of French aid during the American Revolution. The site of Nashville was first known as French Lick. In Ohio, Gallia County and Gallipolis speak of a late eighteenth century immigration. Illinois in its place names does not forget La Salle, Jolliet, and Wilmette.

Among rivers, one finds in the valley such names as Au Glaize, Bayou Pierre, Belle Fourche, Bon Secours, Bonne Femme, Brulé, Cache, Cache le Poudre, Cuivre, Des Plaines, French Broad, Lac qui Parle, Marais de Cygne, Portage, Platte, Rouge, St. Croix, Saline, and Trempealeau. While some of these relate to the fur trade period in American times, others are as old as the days of French discovery, and prove that the memory of France in the Mississippi Valley is not utterly dead.

France, having lost its opportunity of becoming a colonial power in North America, has, in these later years, turned its attention to Africa, and is there building up a colonial empire second only in extent to that of its former rival, Great Britain. Although infinitely less promising than its opportunity in North America, France seems to be succeeding in Africa by the very policies that proved disastrous in the Mississippi Valley. France holds as an ideal of colonial policy the education of the natives in speech and thought. Schools everywhere in North and Central Africa train the sons of chiefs not only to speak French, but to become French in habits and manners. This policy has done wonders for the natives in improved hygiene, administration of justice, and better standards of living. It remains to be seen if it will build a strong state, and if the pitfalls met in American administration may be avoided in France's newer colonial possessions.

Notes

1. A free translation of Jolliet's letter on the border of the map he made for Frontenac. Reuben G. Thwaites (ed.), *Jesuit Relations* (Cleveland, 1896-1901), LIX, 86.

2. *Ibid.*, LVIII, 107.

3. Francis Parkman, *La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West* (Boston, 1892), 295.

4. Herbert E. Bolton, «The Location of La Salle's Colony on the Gulf of Mexico», in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* II, 165-82.

5. Charles Davenant, cited in *Cambridge History of the British Empire* (London, 1929), I, 325.

6. Verner W. Crane, *The Southern Frontier 1670-1732* (Philadelphia, 1929), Chap. III. Bond's log is in *Illinois Historical Collections,* XI, 402-404.

7. Crane, *op. cit.* See, also, by the same author, «The Origins of Georgia,» in *The Georgia Historical Quarterly,* XIV, 94-99.

8. N.M. Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisiana During the French Régime, 1699-1763,* in *Columbia University Studies,* LXXI, 174-78.

9. Louise P. Kellogg (ed.), *Charlevoix's Journal of a Voyage* (Chicago, 1923), II, 230.

10. Dunbar Rowland and A.G. Sanders, *Mississippi Provincial Archives: French Dominion* (Jackson, Mississippi, 1927), I, 123-26.

11. *Ibid.*, 57.

12. Clarence W. Alvord, *The Illinois Country* (Springfield, 1920), 189.

13. Marc de Villiers du Terrage, *Les Dernières Années de la Louisiane Française* (Paris, 1904), 102.

14. Louise P. Kellogg, *The French Régime in Wisconsin and the Northwest* (Madison, 1925), 437-38.

15. Mildred Stahl Fletcher, «Louisiana as a Factor in French Diplomacy from 1763 to 1800», *Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* XVII, 367-76.

16. Paul C. Phillips, *The West in the Diplomacy of the American Revolution* (Urbana, Illinois, 1913); Edward S. Corwin, *French Policy and the American Alliance of 1778* (Princeton, 1916).

17. Reuben G. Thwaites and Louise P. Kellogg, *Frontier Defense on the Upper Ohio, 1777-1778* (Madison, 1912), 299.

18. *Ill. Hist. Colls.*, VIII, 245.

19. Frederick J. Turner, «The Origin of Genêt's Projected Attack on Louisiana and the Floridas», in *American Historical Review,* III, 650; James A. James, *The Life of George Rogers Clark* (Chicago, 1928), 410-11, 418-27.

20. Gilbert Chinard, *Thomas Jefferson, the Apostle of Americanism* (New York, 1929), 401-11.

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FRANCE AND LOUISIANA IN THE EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

By Marcel Giraud

The early history of French Louisiana cannot be separated from the history of France during the last years of the reign of Louis XIV. In a way it is symbolic of that period since it reflects on a small scale the difficulties of France and the economic and moral status of her society. No other French colony in America was born in such difficult circumstances, nor experienced such a painful growth because of a crisis in the homeland. To account for the long stagnation of the lower Mississippi colony, we must examine the desperate situation of France. The reign of Louis XIV was nearing its end and the glamour of its best years was giving way to the misery and demoralization of its society, to the decline of war enterprises which had exhausted the kingdom's resources, and to the weaknesses of a bureaucratic and excessively centralized regime. To support the colonization of Louisiana, which was primarily intended to prevent a foreign foothold at the mouth of the Mississippi, France had neither the material nor the moral resources which had enabled her to conduct with comparative success the colonization of Canada and the West Indies.

France's material resources were being rapidly absorbed by the exhausting War of the Spanish Succession which broke out shortly after the first expeditions of Le Moyne d'Iberville. The treasury deficit incidental to the war affected the Marine Department more than any other, and to the Marine the fate of the colonies was closely linked. As early as 1703, it became obvious that the treasurers of Marine and Galleys were not in a position to meet their financial obligations. The credits provided for their department by the comptroller of finances were not paid to them, and they could not borrow for lack of confidence among moneylenders. The «Munitionnaires de la Marine»—the agents who supplied food to the crews—were no more favorably treated since they were paid in assignations, that is, in drafts entitling them to receive a certain share of the taxes due to the government.

The treasurers could not finance such urgent needs as the equipment of the vessels and the coast guard service. At Rochefort, the boats, being neither caulked nor repaired, were liable to sink in the first storm, and the galleys of the Mediterranean were in the same miserable condition. The king did not seem to heed the Minister of Marine,[1] for when that official was asked to equip two frigates to convoy wheat cargoes coming from the Near East or bound for the troops fighting in Catalonia, he plainly confessed his incapacity to do so on account of inadequate finances.[2] Neglect of the coast guard service had still worse consequences. As late as August of 1704, the crews had received no pay since the beginning of the year. Consequently harbors and main estuaries like the Gironde and the Rhône were left unprotected.

The sailors and gunners, having neither pay nor clothes, refused to work, and in 1709, longboats assigned to protect the coasts of Provence and Languedoc had to be disarmed. From Dunkirk to the Gironde, no battery could be put in operation. The situation was exceptionally serious in Provence on account of the swarms of corsairs who paddled their ships into the Rhône estuary and took away the king's vessels. Under these circumstances, the Minister of Marine could only rely on private initiative. For instance, he accepted the suggestion of a Marseille merchant to arm two galleys at his own expense to defend the coast of Provence.[3]

On the other hand, general dissatisfaction was spreading in the harbors among the unpaid officers and crews. As early as 1704, the Marine Intendant at Brest called the Minister's attention to the fact that the officers' pay was in arrears for seven or eight months and that the workers had nothing to eat. «We have never seen so much misery and desolation,» he wrote. In that year, the sailors did not get the usual compensation at the end of their summer campaign in order to enable them to pay their taxes, and it was even impossible to provide the stocks of boots which were necessary for return to their villages.[4] But in 1709, the situation became still worse. At Toulon, not an officer had received any pay for eighteen months. At Rochefort, Brest, Le Havre, and St. Malo, the working people, the sailors, and their families were trying to sell their furniture to eke out a bare living. The bakers refused to grant them credit, and no merchant would give them clothes, so that they died from cold and hunger; many officers with large families to support were reduced to the short rations of bread which were issued to the unemployed and the poor. Finally, in 1712, misery grew to such an extent that the officers themselves had to sell their furniture and even their own uniforms to find food.[5] It is thus possible to follow from year to year the increasing curve of dissatisfaction and misery.

The consequence was an alarming mortality in most of the seaports. Five to six hundred people died between March and May, 1713. Many people became discouraged and left the harbors for other parts of the kingdom: Brest lost more than five hundred families in four years. But many became so exasperated that they mutinied and plundered on a scale which the police had no means to fight. The great fire at Rochefort in 1706 resulted from this general dissatisfaction, and the Marine Intendant in Lorient refused to attempt the collection of new taxes lest the sailors and workers should set fire to that small town in which most of the houses were covered with thatched roofs. With what major force, asked the intendants, could they oppose the soldiers if they carried out their threat to assail the bakeries? To be sure, the Marine was not the only department affected by the tragic situation of the public finances. In 1713, the Swiss of the Royal Guard complained that they had not been paid for four years for attending funeral services, processions, and Te Deum ceremonies. But after all, it was possible to overlook their complaints, whereas the sailors' dissatisfaction could not be so easily ignored.[6] The munitionnaires' inadequate resources had still worse effects than the poverty of the treasurers because they were responsible for the food supply of the crews.[7] They could not pay the people they formerly employed during the winter to make biscuits and to prepare salted meat, the customary food of the crews. Accordingly, the stocks of food declined gradually in the ports, and every spring, the Minister wondered how he could provide food for the king's fleets.[8]

The situation was equally difficult for the hospitals and for the galley slaves. At Tou-

lon and Dunkirk, the Minister deemed it impossible to require any work of the convicts since they had little food and clothing, and he believed that he would soon have to unchain them to provide opportunity to beg for their living.[9] There was no fuel to light the galleys during the night, and nothing could prevent the slaves from breaking into open rebellion.[10] In the galley slaves' hospital in Toulon, food was so scarce that the distributions of wine, broth, and bread mush were stopped. In the summer of 1709, the marine hospitals refused to admit any more patients because the warehouses of the munitionnaires were empty and the bakers and butchers had ceased to deliver bread and meat.[11] And this was only one aspect of the distressing condition of the hospitals; the impending interruption of laundry service threatened such towns as Brest and Toulon with outbreaks of epidemics.[12]

Actually, this situation was not entirely due to the scarcity of the treasurers' finances, which the government unsuccessfully tried to remedy by creating new offices, by melting old guns and mortars in order to increase the amount of coinage, or by issuing «billets de monnaie» which soon depreciated and saddled the treasury with a new burden.[13] The condition of agriculture contributed to the difficult food situation. During the bad crop years, such as 1711, 1712, 1713, but chiefly 1709, «the year of the great winter,» the various provinces banned exportation of food for fear of dearth or speculation. This paralyzed all initiative among the munitionnaires and reduced the food available for the crews. At Dunkirk, for instance, no wheat was available for the sailors and the prisoners of war because the Intendant of Flanders prohibited exportation of food from his province, and the Minister wondered whether he would not have to release the prisoners and send them back to England. The king, to help such provinces as the Dauphiné where the poor were in miserable condition, took a portion of the crops of the provinces where the agricultural situation was comparatively more favorable, and he thus reduced the food supply of the ports. At a time when the hospital and galleys in Toulon lacked food, the government had to face the wants of the population of Aix en Provence which was, according to its archbishop, in the direst need.[14] This affected the allotment of food which might have been reserved for the ships anchored in Toulon. Agriculture was also affected by the increasing rates of taxation demanded by the ever increasing requirements of the treasury; in the vicinity of La Rochelle, wine growers threatened complete abandonment of the vineyards.[15]

This situation lasted long after the Peace of Utrecht in 1713. For the crews who had expected an alleviation of their sufferings, it was a cruel disappointment. Suffering reached its climax in 1715. In that year, the galley slaves, having neither blankets nor canvas tents, were exposed day and night to all the injuries of the weather. The officers, mostly younger sons of noble families (cadets de maison) without any means of living outside their regular pay, could neither clear the heavy debts they had made during the war, nor provide subsistence since their pay was in depreciating notes, many of which had no legal value. The Minister sadly remarked that the condition of the infantry had slightly improved since 1713 while the Marine was completely neglected by the king.[16]

French colonies were equally neglected since they were dependent upon the Marine Ministry. They were left entirely to their own resources. Louisiana suffered more than any other because, being recently born, she could not exploit her potential resources and expected her entire subsistence from the mother country. But what could she hope for at a time when France was throwing all her strength

into the exhausting War of the Spanish Succession? The credits for Louisiana were irregularly paid and they often arrived after considerable delay. Credits provided for the year 1707 were not paid until 1710.[17] The soldiers' and the officers' pay in Louisiana was subject to the same delays and uncertainties as in the French ports, but the situation was rendered more critical by the exceptionally high cost of living in a country where foodstuffs and goods, being imported from France, were burdened with the high rate of transportation. When Bienville, who sympathized with the settlers' poverty, increased prices at the king's warehouse only 25 percent above the French prices, the Minister reminded him that the majoration was inadequate and that it should advance 100 percent to meet the cost of transportation. This accounts for the ceaseless complaints in the correspondence of the governor, the intendant, and the officers about the insufficiency of their salaries, their incapacity to support their families, and the dissatisfaction of the soldiers who were without clothes, blankets, swords, and even ammunition.[18] The Minister of Marine, not being in a position to pay the expense of the colony in coin, advised Bienville to pay the officers and soldiers with goods out of the king's warehouse. But these goods were supposed to provide presents for the Indians, and since they were the only guarantee of the loyalty of the natives, the suggestion of the Minister soon became another source of complaint and difficulty.[19] To reduce expenses, he asked Bienville to make the settlers pay for the officers' lodging.[20] But here again the population was too poor to assume this new burden. As for the food supply of the colony, it was linked to the same problems as in France and it created a situation at least equally critical. There were few vessels available and seaworthy in the French ports, as we have already said, and the uncertainties of the crossings during the war delayed the ships or prevented them from reaching their destination. Finally, the scarcity of the crops during the bad years, chiefly crops of the western provinces of France,[21] the stern reductions of the colony's demands by the Minister in order to economize his credits or to lighten the boats, the slowness of the contractors in facing the requirements of the government—all these factors put the colony in an awkward predicament.[22]

Climate also had its share of responsibility. Foodstuffs traveled from Rochefort to Louisiana in bad storage conditions, and vegetables, grains, and lard intended for the colony frequently spoiled before arrival.[23] Excessive heat made it impossible to store the salted meat dispatched from France. Misery was even greater than in the French harbors, for there was no relief institution in the colony, no help provided for the destitute families, no possibility of begging for a living. The only way to alleviate the public suffering was to call on the Indians for a share of their corn crops. For months, the soldiers were reduced to the monotonous corn mush of the Indians, and in certain years, they had to live among the natives in order to relieve the pressure of food.[24] Sometimes the government managed to relieve the situation with costly imports of food from Vera Cruz, just as France imported food from Holland or the Near East during the war. But this was a heavy burden for the small budget of the colony, and Louisiana could seldom resort to that ultimate solution.[25] During the periods of dearth, the sick, as in the French ports, endured the greatest hardships; the diet of broth and salted lard to which they were reduced in Mobile was no more than adequate than the diet in the Toulon and Brest hospitals. At least in France this was an exceptional circumstance, whereas in Louisiana it was the usual diet on account of the lack of fresh meat incidental to the scarcity of cattle.[26] Consequently discipline was as difficult to enforce among the sailors and soldiers as in the French ports. From the begin-

ning, desertion appeared as a widespread evil. The proximity of the Spanish fort of Pensacola made it easy for soldiers to desert, and the anchoring in San Domingo of boats bound for Louisiana had the same effect among the sailors.

All these difficulties might easily have been overcome if Louisiana had been able to make herself economically independent of France by producing the supplies she expected from the old country. But Louisiana could not attain this end as long as her population was not large enough to raise what she needed. The limited budget was as great an obstacle to the settling of the colony as it was to provisioning it. The Minister of Marine, at grips with the desperate situation of his department, could not think of asking for special credits for the transportation of settlers.

The situation was much the same in all French colonies. The army absorbed all available men, and in 1708, Minister Jérôme de Phélippeaux, comte de Pontchartrain, wrote to the governor of Cayenne that he should give up any hope of seeing the colonies «fortified and increased» before the re-establishment of peace.[27] At the same time, it was becoming impossible to send to the West Indies any more engagés, the equivalent of the British indentured servants, who had played such an important part in the settling of these islands, because the French merchants, in spite of the repeated injunctions of the king, could not find any more men to serve in that capacity.[28] Everywhere the food situation was difficult. Cayenne, San Domingo, and the Windward Islands seldom received flour from France. Only one longboat, carrying a shipment of Bordeaux wines, reached Cayenne during the fifteen months ending in May, 1709. In the West Indies, one had to feed the soldiers on cassava, or manioc flour.[29]

But nowhere was the situation as distressing as in Louisiana. The Mississippi colony, having been recently established, still comprised only a handful of men and, unlike the West Indies which had imported slaves for many years, did not have this labor supply so indispensable in hot climates. Accordingly, Louisiana could not start the cultivation of grains; its first attempts at growing wheat had been a complete failure. In Cayenne and San Domingo, it was at least possible to ask the population to feed the soldiers, as was the case in 1709. In Louisiana, this was entirely out of the question on account of the small acreage in crops and the sparse population.[30] Add to this the high cost of living, which was still to increase during Antoine Crozat's monopoly, and the diseases unavoidable in the hot, damp climate, and one will easily understand why Louisiana was the most unpopular of the French colonies. This is substantiated by the fact that very few craftsmen expressed the wish to migrate to Louisiana, with the exception perhaps of a few men in the very early years of the colony who had been impressed with the possible resources of the Louisiana forest and who had thought of starting the manufacture of masts and tar. But usually the craftsmen who wished to expatriate themselves applied either for Martinique or San Domingo.[31] When, exceptionally, a settler from San Domingo came to Louisiana to try his luck, he quickly gave up his scheme and went back to his country.[32]

The settlement of Louisiana was chiefly handicapped by a cause deeper and more complex than the factors which so far have been examined. Louisiana was above all the victim of the period in which she was born and of French society at that time. The social classes of France did not set their minds on colonial activities. The peasantry, usually poor and uneducated, did not think of colonial enterprises. The bourgeoisie looked on them with reluc-

tance. Pontchartrain himself confessed, in a letter written in 1708, that the French merchants, unlike their English contemporaries, were reluctant to leave their country and transport their business overseas or to invest their capital in colonial adventures. This was especially true in an adventure like Louisiana which was still fraught with dangers and uncertainties.[33] A typical example of the mentality of the French bourgeoisie was their attitude when the Minister called on private initiative in 1708 to try to rid the king of the burden of Louisiana which the treasury could no longer support. His suggestions and his appeals were met with indifference or even hostility by the commercial classes of St. Malo.[34] He did not have better luck in Nantes or in La Rochelle when he urged the merchants to ship food supplies to Louisiana. Of course, as he himself acknowledged, the «conjecture was very embarrassing.»[35] The bad condition of the Marine services was very harmful to the commercial life of the French ports: Lorient activity had come to a standstill, and many La Rochelle shipowners were on the brink of ruin on account of the great advances they made for the armament of the king's vessels without any hope of reimbursement. Hence there were numerous bankruptcies in French harbors; hence also an increasing scarcity of coin, which was secretly sent away to foreign countries like Holland whenever there was a possibility of evasion.[36] These various factors prevented the bourgeoisie from assembling capital to invest in colonial enterprises.

Beyond these considerations, the French bourgeoisie were affected by an older and graver evil: the tendency to buy public offices. These had increased considerably during the war because the king had sought new sources of income in the creation of new offices. Industrialists and traders did not participate prominently in bourgeois activity of that time. Those who played the most important role were the law officers, finance officers, and municipal officers who bequeathed their offices to their descendants. All annuitants whose wealth was based on the possession of public offices were averse to any idea of risk or adventure, unlike the English middle classes of the same time. Bankers and businessmen were of slight importance in the bourgeoisie, and they were less interested in trading operations, in industrial or colonial activities than in the money loans they made to the government. When the sons of that bourgeoisie came of age, their fathers would send them to law school to give them a legal training which would put them in a position to acquire new offices. And this for two reasons: first of all, in the possession of public office, they saw the certainty of a regular annuity; secondly, they saw the social prestige which would enable their sons to intermarry with noble families. If the officer made money, he preferred to buy real estate rather than invest it in trading or industrial operations. The rich farmers acted much in the same way. They encouraged their sons to study law and acquire public office, instead of arousing in them an ambition to open a plantation in some new colony. The positions in greatest demand were the finance offices because they were the most lucrative. This explains why the concentration of capital in France originated in finance offices more than in trading operations. And this is the reason why Louisiana was finally farmed out in 1712, not to a representative of the commercial or industrial classes, but to the financier Crozat, a representative of that bourgeoisie whose fortune had been built on the proceeds of finance officers and on the interest from money lent to the government. In a way this was a regrettable solution because Crozat, although he was one of the few who had the financial means to support the colony, lacked the farsightedness of the businessman or the empire maker. One can easily judge how feebly

the French bourgeoisie was inclined to support such a remote enterprise as the colonization of Louisiana. The mentality of that class reflected the evil effects wrought by the sale of public offices which had been in operation, to be conservative, for over a century.

Besides, at the time when Louisiana came into being, French society had lost the moral impulse which would have been necessary for the launching of a successful colonial enterprise. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the foundation of Canada had been largely moved by a religious impulse which had counteracted to a certain extent the effects of the mentality of the French bourgeoisie. In the early eighteenth century, there were no longer any strong moral forces. As evidenced by the French literature of the time, there remained only a certain amount of curiosity in America. The religious impulse had considerably declined, the level of piety was in fast regression, and the missionaries who accepted to preach the Gospel in remote colonies, chiefly in the hot climates, had neither the scope of intelligence nor the ardent faith of their forefathers. The behavior of the Jacobins and Capuchins in Martinique and Guadeloupe testified to a frame of mind far remote from the strong ideals which had actuated the Jesuits when they started the colonization of Canada. The Minister bitterly reproached them for stressing material profits and for neglecting their moral duties. He took them severely to task for not endeavoring to produce a lasting work and for leaving the colonies as soon as their material ambitions had been fulfilled.[37] When the Superior of the Jacobins in Martinique tried to uproot the abuses which had grown among his missionaries, a sort of rebellion broke out and two missionaries were expelled from the island. There were many complaints against the missionaries for refusing to attend to the sick and to cooperate with the doctors in the Martinique hospital. When a Jacobin from Rouen applied for the West Indies, the king replied that he would accept only those who belonged to the «Great Reformation,» because of the disappointments he had experienced with previous missionaries.

The attitude of certain missionaries in the early years of Louisiana cannot be ignored: the refusal of the priest François Jolliet De Montigny to remain in a country which he had come to evangelize, or the feuds between Roulleau de La Vente and the lay authorities. La Vente's failure among the French settlers pointed to a decline from the ardent faith of the previous century. These missionaries did not have the sincere convictions which were necessary to overcome the religious indifference of the early Louisiana settlers, who were averse to the religious zeal which the king and his Minister urged them to observe.

The missionary François Le Maire sadly noticed in 1717 this religious apathy which belied in a way the public prayers and official ceremonies of the Catholic Church. In spite of outward decorum, the Minister of Marine frequently had to remind the governors, the intendants, the soldiers, and their officers of their religious duties.[38] Le Maire, discouraged by his personal experiences in Louisiana, came to the conclusion that religion was no longer a determining factor in colonization. As an alternative, would the patriotic motive—the will to enlarge the possessions of France—make up for the decline of the religious motive?[39] The need for expansion was also on the wane in a society engrossed in its war effort and upset by the uncertainties of a quickly disintegrating political regime. What remained then to prop up the Louisiana adventure? Obviously the colony was the victim of the critical situation of France, of the state of mind of her population; it was the victim in a word of the period in which it was born.

After reviewing the decline of the religious and patriotic motives, Le Maire came to the conclusion that colonization could only be spurred by the search for material profits since, as he said, cupidity was the main incentive of world affairs. To quote his own expression, «la cupidité est le principal mobile des affaires de ce bas-monde.»[40] But Le Maire omitted to specify how far Louisiana could inspire materialistic motives. He mentioned the possibility of a lucrative trade with the Spanish colonies of Central America. But the reluctance of the Spaniards to open commercial intercourse with Louisiana made this suggestion soon appear chimerical. And, when the king gave up his colony to Crozat, the exclusive trade monopoly which he granted to the financier not only discouraged private initiative, but also made it impossible for any trader to share the commerce of Louisiana. If Crozat had understood his monopoly as a means of stimulating colonial production by a judicious balance between prices of local products and imports, the system might have worked successfully. But he applied his monopoly with a bitterly interested frame of mind, the result of which was to paralyze settlers' activities. Moreover, the king, in enforcing monopolies of his own on top of the Crozat monopoly, contributed to the same result. For instance, the discovery of saltpeter in Louisiana was immediately followed by an ordinance banning the manufacture of powder under penalty of hard labor for life.[41] Obviously, materialistic motives, contrary to Le Maire's suggestions, could stimulate the colonization of Louisiana no more than religious or patriotic motives.

The only chance for a sizable emigration in that preliminary period lay in the misery incidental to the war and in the hope entertained by unemployed craftsmen to find better conditions of living in the colonies. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Marine hoped that, with the re-establishment of peace, Louisiana and the West Indies would benefit by this distress and unemployment, coupled with the spirit of adventure which he thought was still alive in the younger generation. In such harbors as La Rochelle, the decline of trade had reduced many craftsmen to beggary, and in the industrial town of Flanders, close to the battlefields, suffering was still more acute. As early as 1709, a number of workers proposed to leave for the colonies but were unsuccessful because the treasurers of Marine could not pay their passage.[42] In 1714, after the peace of Utrecht, twenty-five to thirty people of the industrial zone of Tournai and Lille, ruined by the war, offered to go to the American colonies, and the Minister felt sure that many others would soon follow their example.[43] But, on the whole, this amounted to very little. These few pioneers failed to win followers and in any case the situation of the treasury precluded satisfactory arrangements. It should be added that the re-establishment of peace apparently showed, contrary to the Minister's expectation, that the French population had little desire for expatriation. The Minister had believed that the discharged soldiers would enlist in great numbers for the colonies. The «reformed soldiers and horsemen,» however, preferred to enlist for agricultural work in French provinces. In La Rochelle twelve men only, in Rochefort twenty-five, in Port Louis fifteen against one hundred and fifty who were expected, tendered their services for the West Indies.

Finally, it should be said that Louisiana was comparatively neglected by the government, whose attention was chiefly concentrated on the West Indies. Perhaps France lacked a great minister who understood the future of Louisiana and who would give her in his colonial policy the place she deserved. Pontchartrain, the Minister of Marine, could not compare with Jean B. Colbert. But he had

to deal with a situation more complex. Without being hostile to the Louisiana adventure, he first considered it as a provisional enterprise, and he hesitated to commit himself until the Iberville expedition should reveal its value. When it became apparent that the post built by Iberville might become the nucleus of a colony, Pontchartrain did his best to promote it. As early as 1699, he expressed his surprise at the attitude of the munitionnaire who seemed reluctant to provide the food supplies asked by Iberville, and he issued instructions to assure the reception of the supplies he needed—clothing, ammunition, presents for the Indians, and the pay due to the Biloxi garrison—regardless of the wine which was to make up for the scarcity of drinking water. In 1704, Pontchartrain emphasized the necessity of making the best of the natural fertility of the soil, and he even drew an elementary plan of agricultural colonization. His views on the colonies were usually sensible and testify to a clear conception of their interests as linked to the interests of France. He laid the main stress on the agricultural potentialities of the colonies. This was, in his opinion, the only means to unsaddle the kingdom from the heavy debts it paid to foreign countries. For instance, in 1700, France paid to Portugal 1,200,000 livres for tobacco and sugar, and Pontchartrain wrote in this connection that the only way to keep national capital was to grow the same crops in French colonies.[44] If he expressed, after a few years, a certain dissatisfaction with Louisiana, if he said in 1707 that the colony should be given up, it does not mean that he disapproved of its creation, but that, in the financial situation of France, Louisiana had become a heavy burden which the royal treasury could not bear. The difficulties which Pontchartrain faced are a sufficient excuse for his attitude.

But one cannot deny that, while Pontchartrain had no hostility towards Louisiana (he showed it clearly enough after Utrecht), he was more interested in the West Indies which had been longer in existence and were more advanced economically. From the beginning, they had had the benefit of engagés, a system which did not operate in Louisiana in this early period. Every merchant ship had to transport a certain number of these servants whose indenture extended over three years, and from 1699, every settler had to take one of them for twenty Negroes employed. The islands, accordingly, did not lack labor. St. Christopher received in 1699 fifty young servants from Poitou and Limousin, along with six masons and stone hewers, in order to build the fortifications which had been contemplated, whereas Louisiana had neither servants nor slaves. Finally, soldiers were sent in larger numbers to the West Indies than to Louisiana; among them craftsmen and workers were in sufficient number, and the practice of discharging them as soon as they married promoted an increase in population. When the decision was taken after the peace of Utrecht to send «reformed» soldiers to the American colonies, it was intended for the benefit of the West Indies. This does not mean that the Minister would have refused to send to Louisiana such soldiers as were willing to go there. To make the plan successful, the government asked the shipowners to transport soldiers instead of servants, and material help was promised soldiers who would «make establishments.»[45] In fact, until the end of the French regime, the West Indies were more favored in every respect. Even during the French and Indian War, the Swiss regiment of New Orleans was trying to get in San Domingo the clothes which the soldiers could not find in Louisiana. Meanwhile, a policy of excessive frugality was applied to Louisiana. The colony did not receive any servants and was always behind the West Indies in the matter of military reinforcements. In 1709, out of 180 recruits who had been concentrated in the isle of Oléron

awaiting a passage, 25 were intended for Louisiana and 155 for Martinique. As for the civilian population, its recruitment was still more limited. Occasionally a small number of girls and boys picked out of the Paris or Brittany hospitals were sent over. The selection of 20 in 1704 had been entrusted to the Bishop of Quebec, de St. Vallier, who was then in Paris.[46] And it is a well-known fact that Crozat was obligated to ship every year only 10 or 12 hospital boys or girls.

But it should be said, in fairness to Pontchartrain, that he was not the only one responsible for this seeming indifference towards the settlement of Louisiana. He simply shared the prejudice of the government in favor of the older colonies, and the policy he applied was inherited from his predecessors. With Louisiana in its infancy, everything had to be done, new devices had to be worked out, and the Minister did not have adequate funds to carry them out because he was not supported by the comptroller of finances. In fact, Nicolas Desmaretz, who held that position, was really responsible for the stagnant situation of the colony. He usually left unanswered the letters of Pontchartrain calling his attention to the distressing condition of the Marine Department. And when Pontchartrain, after Utrecht, tried to set up a scheme for speeding the settlement of Louisiana, the indifference so far evinced by Desmaretz changed into open hostility.

In October, 1714, Pontchartrain emphasized to Desmaretz the necessity of peopling the colonies on a larger scale. Three colonies appeared to him as being worthy of attention: Louisiana, Cayenne, and Ile Royale, whose strong position at the entrance of the St. Lawrence partially compensated for the losses at Utrecht. He urged Desmaretz to act quickly during the period of peace opened by the treaty of 1713. To increase the population of Louisiana, he said, would be to reduce the food supplies coming from France and ward off the possible aggressions of England, whose colonial forces surpassed those of the French. Apparently taking up a suggestion made by Crozat, he proposed to set up two yearly lotteries, the benefits of which would fetch the Marine treasury 35,000 livres. As an alternative, he proposed to obtain the same amount of money by keeping 3 percent of the proceeds of the numerous lotteries which took place every year in Paris, and to use this money for the transportation of poor families to the colonies.[47] The proposal was very sensible. Pauperism had considerably increased, largely owing to the war, and the poor taxed the capacity of the hospitals. Every year some six thousand foundlings were born in the city of Paris; and poverty was a factor whether they were legitimate or illegitimate children.

To impress the Comptroller of Finances more deeply, Pontchartrain insisted that his plan would not involve any expense for the treasury since the funds would be provided by the profits accruing to the lotteries.[48] Unfortunately, Pontchartrain met a sharp rebuke. Desmaretz answered that he would examine the part of the proposal dealing with the lotteries, but he refused to allow the expatriation of poor families on the plea that war had weakened the population of France and that he could not consider any further loss of people. Pontchartrain insisted that England and Holland owed their colonial strength to the great number of migrating subjects, and that France could not indefinitely maintain a position which became weaker every year in North America. If poor families ruined by the war could not serve as a source of supply, would it not be possible to call on the young people who uselessly filled the hospitals? With the proceeds of the lotteries, two hundred people could be sent annually to the colonies, a figure which was small enough to allay Des-

maretz's fears that the departure of poor families would weaken the population of France. But the Comptroller of Finances overlooked even this last argument. In his reply, he said that one could not rely on families ruined by the war to settle the colonies; the attitude of the «reformed» soldiers who refused to leave France proved it conclusively. He made no allusion to the suggestion that people in the hospitals be selected. As for the colonies which France would be interested in settling, Desmaretz replied there was only one, Ile Royale, on account of the trade incidental to its cod fisheries and because of the excellent training school fishing operations might provide for future sailors.[49] The lottery scheme gradually fell into oblivion, and Louisiana was reduced to the small number of yearly passengers provided by the instructions to Crozat.

The early years of the Mississippi colony thus reflect the history of France towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV. From the death of Colbert until the birth of Louisiana, the era of great colonial enterprises was drawing to its end for the old monarchy. The difficulties which hampered the expansion of the colony in the beginning of its existence were indicative of the general decline of an era; the financial distress of the kingdom, coupled with the shortsighted policy of the Comptroller of Finances; the weakening of the moral resources of a society which, for the time being, was no longer actuated by the religious or patriotic motives of the previous century; and a society which could not find in the semi-derelict colony of Louisiana a satisfactory counterpart to the profits which the middle classes could more easily secure in French territory.

Notes

1. Jérôme de Phélippeaux, *comte* de Pontchartrain, to Michel de Chamillart, August 1, 1703, December 17, 1704, February 23, 1707, Archives Nationales (Paris), G7-533; Pontchartrain to Nicolas Desmaretz, January 23, 1709; *ibid.*, G7-534.

2. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, April 18, 1708, *ibid.*, G7-533; Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, March 27, August 20, September 10, 1709, *ibid.*, G7-534; Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, September 13, November 22, 1713, April 23, 1715, *ibid.*, G7-535.

3. Pontchartrain to Chamillart, August 13, 1704, *ibid.*, G7-533; Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, February 27, 1709, April 13, July 3, 1712, *ibid.*, G7-534.

4. Pontchartrain to François Roger Robert, October 13, 1704; Pontchartrain to Chamillart, December 17, 1704, January 20, 1706, *ibid.*, G7-533.

5. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, February 27, May 8, 22, June 12, July 20, 31, August 7, 1709, March 14, 1712, *ibid.*, G7-534.

6. Pontchartrain to Chamillart, January 20, 1706, *ibid.*, G7-533; Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, January 23, 30, 1709, February 17, July 20, 1712, *ibid.*, G7-534; Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, May 24, 31, 1713, February 7, 1714, February 20, 1715, *ibid.*, G7-535.

7. Pontchartrain to Chamillart, February 23, 1707, *ibid.*, G7-533; Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, January 30, 1709, *ibid.*, G7-534.

8. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, January 30, 1709, *ibid.*, G7-534.

9. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, February 27, June 12, September 10, 1709, *ibid.*, G7-934; Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, November 14, 1714, *ibid.*, G7-535.

10. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, January 23, 1715, *ibid.*, G7-535.

11. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, January 23, February 27, April 10, 1709, *ibid.*, G7-534

12. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, January 23, 1715, *ibid.*, G7-535.

13. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, August 20, September 10, October 19, 1709, *ibid.*, G7-534.

14. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, March 27, April 10, May 8, 1709, *ibid.*, G7-534.

15. François de Beauharnais to Pontchartrain, May 24, 1714, *ibid.*, G7-342.

16. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, January 23, May 13, June 5, July 17, August 14, 21, 1715, *ibid.*, G7-535.

17. *Ibid.*, B-29, p. 282; B-30, pp. 79, 106.

18. *Ibid.*, C 13A-II, p. 135.

19. *Ibid.*, B-30, pp. 106-107.

20. *Ibid.*, C 13A-II, p. 68.

21. Beauharnais to Pontchartrain, May 23, 1713, *ibid.*, G7-342; Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, January 4, 1713, *ibid.*, G7-535.

22. *Ibid.*, B-34, p. 171; B-35, pp. 8, 40.

23. Pontchartrain to Michel Bégon, December 1, 1706, *ibid.*, B-29, p. 240; Pontchartrain to Bégon, October 31, 1708, *ibid.*, B-30, p. 54; Pontchartrain to Duclos, December 30, 1712, *ibid.*, B-34, p. 172.

24. *Ibid.*, C 13A-II, p. 92.

25. *Ibid.*, C 13A-II, pp. 6,7.

26. *Ibid.*, C 13A-I, p. 459.

27. *Ibid.*, B-31, p. 142.

28. Pontchartrain to Le Fèvre d'Albon, July 25, 1708, *ibid.*, B-31, p. 145.

29. Pontchartrain to Le Fèvre d'Albon, May 15, 1709, *ibid.*, B-31, p. 454; Pontchartrain to Gabaret, September 30, 1709, *ibid.*, B-31, p. 525.

30. *Ibid.*, B-31, p. 454.

31. *Ibid.*, B-29, pp. 271, 281; B-31, pp. 436, 510-11, 519, 533.

32. Pontchartrain to de Muy, September 27, 1707, *ibid.*, B-29, p. 289.

33. Pontchartrain to D'Aguesseau, June 20, 1708, *ibid.*, B-31, p. 85.

34. Pontchartrain to L'Empereur de la Lève, October 24, November 9, 1708, *ibid.*, B-30, p. 51.

35. Pontchartrain to Nicolas Mesnager, June 10, 1709, *ibid.*, B-30, p. 128.

36. Correspondence of the Rochefort and La Rochelle merchants, July 16, 21, September 7, 1715, *ibid.*, G7-342; Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, February 7, 1714, May 29, 1715, *ibid.*, G7-535.

37. *Ibid.*, B-21, pp. 109, 137, 159, 212; B-31, pp. 435, 469.

38. *Ibid.*, B-34, p. 182; B-35, p. 354; B-38, pp. 302-303.

39. Bibliothèque Nationale, Manuscrits, Fonds Français, 12.105, pp. 13-14.

40. *Ibid.*

41. Archives Nationales, B-35, p. 356.

42. *Ibid.*, B-31, p. 436.

43. *Ibid.*, B-20, pp. 263-64, 266-67, 273; B-25, p. 17.

44. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, January 6, 1700, *ibid.*, G7-533.

45. *Ibid.*, B-35, pp. 127-28, 144.

46. Pontchartrain to Le Moyne de Bienville, January 30, 1704, *ibid.*, B-25, pp. 15-16.

47. Pontchartrain to Desmaretz, October 4, 1714, *ibid.*, G7-535.

48. This was at a time when lotteries were instituted for the most various pretenses, such as helping the sisters of the St. Mandé hospital to pay their debts or the Théatins to restore their convent.

49. Desmaretz to Pontchartrain, October 8, November 26, 1714, Archives Nationales, G7-21; Desmaretz to Pontchartrain, December 9, 1714, *ibid.*, G7-535.

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BIENVILLE'S FIRST ADMINISTRATION

By Charles Edward O'Neill

When Sauvole died in August, 1701, his second-in-command succeeded him. The new commandant of the Biloxi outpost was Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville. The younger brother of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, he bore the landed title of an elder brother who had died quite young. Truly a Le Moyne in every inch of his sturdy Canadian frame, he was not cowed by the Frenchmen of France; rather, he gloried in his Canadian origin, and he preferred to have Canadians to execute his orders in a country where knowledge of woods and terrain was essential. In this cohesive family he was loyal to his elder brother Pierre, nineteen years his senior; and he protected the interests of his brothers Joseph Le Moyne de Sérigny and Antoine Le Moyne de Châteaugué. An in-law and a nephew were also to play their part in building up the family enterprise in Louisiana. At a mere twenty-one years of age, Jean-Baptiste began governing Louisiana for a decade of its leanest years. Young as he was, he lacked no assurance. He had endured hardships in the service of the King of France, that had matured and aged him beyond his years. In a few years, when he reminded the Minister of Marine of the damage his health had suffered in the Gulf climate, he stated he was two years older than he really was. He had served under his brother in previous exploits, and with a flash of humor, he had single-handed sent the witless English Captain Bond packing from the newly discovered mouth of the Mississippi River.[1]

The new commandant was masterful in his dealings with the Indians. His first courtesy was to learn their languages, and his second, to participate in their ritual hospitality with no sign of impatience or disdain. The Indians were «thrilled to see a French chief make much of them, and have them dine with him—they are quite sensitive to all of this.»[2] From no less an Indian expert than Jacques Gravier, veteran of almost twenty years of mission life among the Mississippi Valley tribes, he received earnest praise. The Jesuit wrote the Ministry of Marine that Bienville had a flair for languages, and that he knew marvelously well how to deal with the natives. In his diplomacy, the young commandant worked out a peace settlement between the warring Chickasaw and Choctaw. He also set aside lands for the Apalachee tribe who were fleeing before the invading English and their allies. Only the Alabama, supplied with English rifles, resisted this frontier diplomat.[3]

It was only natural, then, that, when yellow fever carried Iberville off in Havana in July, 1706, Iberville's younger brother should succeed him. But not everyone was happy when the news reached the colony's capital of Fort Louis de la Mobile; not all shared the sentiments of the Indians and of Gravier. Bienville's person and policies were under

severe judgment by Nicholas de la Salle, administrator of the King's warehouse and acting chief finance officer of the infant colony. Bienville was equally opposed by the seminary priests, to whom, since July, 1703, the parish in Mobile had been confided.

In 1700, Nicholas de la Salle was already watching with jealousy as Louisiana posts fell into the hands of others. Invoking the experience he had acquired with Robert Cavelier de la Salle, he complained to the Minister that he had received no office in spite of his qualifications as an administrative secretary; he was, furthermore, in need of a position to support his large family. Pontchartrain sent him out to Louisiana with Iberville and had him set up as commissary in the Biloxi fort in the summer of 1701. Iberville, pleased to see the secretary bring his family out, had, as encouragement to others, recommended that La Salle's salary be raised.[4] But if La Salle had found favor with the elder Le Moyne, he did not get along with the younger. Against a background of family jealousy,[5] the two men found it easy to quarrel over their offices, each accusing the other of encroachment. By the time Bienville succeeded his brother in 1706, La Salle had become in his eyes chief political rival and chief troublemaker in the colony.[6]

Those colonists who, with La Salle, were in opposition to the young governor, whom they considered brash and domineering, could count on the support of their spiritual director, M. Henri Roulleaux de la Vente, whom the Bishop of Quebec had named pastor of Mobile—«outside of the King's fort»—in July, 1703.[7] Yet even before this opponent's arrival, Bienville had won the hostility of the seminary priests on several counts.

In late July, 1702, M. Nicholas Foucault, their missionary confrere and three French traveling companions, had been beaten and hacked to death by the handful of Koroa tribesmen hired as their rowers on the Mississippi. Consternation fell upon the seminary missioners, few as they were and discouraged as they already were by the Indians' lack of response to the gospel. To their headquarters on the Rue du Bac in Paris, Davion, missionary among the Tunica, complained that the assault which had struck down Foucault would prove fatal to the missions if it were to go unpunished: small fires must be put out while they are small, and «the earliest measures may come too late,» he warned; he and his servant-helper Charles Dumont had already come close to being killed. «It is to be hoped that the Court will make known that it is its intention that [the officials] uphold the missionaries and see that they are respected by the natives; otherwise there is no hope for doing any good among them.»[8]

To the Bishop of Quebec, Davion moaned that the missionaries «were being killed on all sides,» and that, «unless God soon send aid, there would be no way to have missions in the area.»[9] Since justice had not been visited upon the murderers, the result would be, in frontier fashion, that French lives would henceforth be held in contempt. The French garrison, because of its small numbers, (so it was said in the colony) was unable to demand that the tribe punish the criminals. Davion, although a mild personality, let sarcasm flow into the «so it was said,» and he and his confreres questioned the determination and the courage of the commandant.[10] These ecclesiastics from France could not have chosen a more sensitive spot to attack the officer from Canada. The lines were written from Mobile, where Davion had come to spend the tense months that followed Foucault's murder. Bienville would not forget that this man had chosen safety instead of martyrdom.

Davion and his confrere were further

annoyed by Bienville's lack of deference and his failure to consult them on Indian affairs. Their superiors in Paris were therefore requested to send instructions on how to deal with this commandant and his officers. The missionaries refused to let themselves be treated like army and navy chaplains who were, of course, subject to officers' orders. To prevent Bienville from bringing such practices into the colony, the priests asked whether the Rue du Bac knew of and could send out some «Royal *Ordonnance* concerning the clergy, stating that the ecclesiastical state is the First Estate of His Kingdom; it would on occasion be useful to have [such a document].» The missionaries desired some legal support and some official clarification of their position in order to be firm when the situation required it. They also hoped to be reassured on the Court's intention concerning the Indians: Were the missionaries to have nothing to say in council on Indian policy?[11] If they felt the need of such a shield against the young lieutenant in 1703, how much more they felt it when three years later he succeeded his brother!

There was one major policy concerning the Indians that the seminary priests constantly pressed for. From their entry into the valley in 1699, they had seen that the scattered tribes, each small in numbers, would require more priests than ever could be furnished. Even if it were possible to find enough missionaries, each one would be able to influence only a few souls. He then ran the risk of seeing disease or a stronger tribe annihilate his flock. A policy of «gathering» was therefore essential in the eyes of the missioners. Let gifts be given the tribes, let «attractive churches» be built, they kept repeating; this was a task for the government to assume, for the sake of the colony.[12] And they were soon to win the Minister's support.

In 1700, Montigny's personal report in France had gone a long way toward changing official ideas of the population of the Mississippi Valley. Instead of the vast numbers imagined by civil and religious authorities, his reduced estimate for the whole valley, from the Illinois down to the Gulf of Mexico, put the number of inhabitants at about 20,000.[13]

Davion agreed with Montigny. The most populous nations were the Choctaw and the Chickasaw. The former he estimated as having fewer than a thousand cabins, the latter fewer than five hundred. High infant mortality kept the «cabin,» or family, small. The Choctaw villages alone were so spread out that they would need twenty or thirty missionaries; if brought together, they would constitute three or four solid villages.[14] Davion considered all mission progress impossible until such a step was taken, and he therefore indicated that it was a matter of conscience for the seminary superiors to «do what they could to convince the [government] authorities of the need for this gathering.»[15] He was aware that the missionaries alone were powerless to bring the villages together; he had lived in the bush long enough to know that it could be done only by presents given to the chiefs and to those who would let themselves be persuaded. For this reason, the Court would have to provide the financial assistance needed. The Superiors were further invited to convince Iberville of the need for the program so that he might provide attention and care, but death was to prevent the discoverer from returning to his colony. To forestall any moral objection, Davion explained that it was necessary for the tribes' own defense against their enemies. He also stated that trade could serve as a lever, but there was no question of effecting the change by force.[16]

La Vente, in the first report he sent out from Mobile headquarters, wrote that the Indians' dispersion was the greatest obstacle to

their conversion and that the governor could induce them to bring their villages together. La Vente, confident there would be no resistance, foresaw only good effects: the assembled tribe would learn agricultural methods and would strengthen itself against enemy attacks.[17]

The argument for self-defense was given new urgency when the haggard remnant of the Apalachee tribe from Spanish Florida sought refuge near the French in Mobile. Their villages had been struck by some 1,500 Indians led by seventy English soldiers under Governor James Moore of Carolina. «They took prisoner thirty-two Spaniards in garrison there,» Bienville reported to Pontchartrain; «of these they burned seventeen, including three Franciscans. And they killed or captured six or seven thousand Appalachians.»[18] Although the raid had taken the lives of six Franciscans, only one, it seems, suffered torture and mutilation. Two Spanish soldiers were burned along with Apalachee leaders. Generally, in frontier battle, the Europeans ransomed other Europeans who had been captured by their Indian allies; the frontier missionary was warned not to count on such quarter.[19]

From 1703 to 1705, such reports and requests had made their way to the Court, and by late 1705, the assembling idea had won acceptance at the Ministry of Marine. Instructions were drawn up and addressed to Bienville: he was to aid the missionaries «in assembling as best as could be done the savage nations in order to set them in a situation where they could be instructed.» And Bienville was to discuss with the missionaries the measures to be taken to attain the goal.[20]

Iberville's plan of the strategic mission in the interior was not thereby rejected; it was simply developed, for the two policies were complementary rather than exclusive. Now the tribal posts toward the English frontier would be reinforced villages instead of weak ones. But practical problems retarded implementation of the program.

In July, 1706, Bienville explained to the Minister of Marine that in order to assemble the Indians into villages, he would need presents; more goods had to be sent. Pontchartrain read his report, and then, while agreeing with this necessity, minuted a reply dictated by the financial burden of the current war: «To be distributed with an eye to economy.»[21] The English government was less parsimonious. M. de la Vente observed:

> It is not for us to analyze the policy of earthly powers, but you do not need to make a study of this worldly science to see that England has broad views and wide pretentions over this continent we occupy. To be fully convinced, you need only know what the Queen of England has just done. It is reported that she has set up a fund of 1,500,000 pounds for presents to win the affection and the hearts of the savages of this continent.[22]

When the goods from France did not arrive, the commandant felt obliged to press his request a few months later. Although there were fewer natives in the area than had at first been thought, it was now time to insist that there were thousands to be dealt with:

> I have already taken the liberty of informing Your Lordship that in order to succeed in assembling all the nations of this continent in villages and to make it easier for the missionaries to do good among them, I will without fail be obliged to make presents to each nation. I make bold, my Lord, to represent to you that the King does not send enough goods for the great number of savages there are in the area.[23]

While the commandant still hoped to win the Chickasaw to the interests of France and away from their English neighbors in Carolina, he was obliged to report that illness among his few troops had kept him from establishing the crucial post among that powerful tribe.[24] Given his military weakness, the program of gathering took on added significance. Nevertheless, with the rare exception of a village or tribe drastically reduced by disease or hereditary foes, no such assembling ever got underway. The «reducciones» of Paraguay were to have no counterpart in Louisiana.

So severe were the cuts made by the Minister of Marine on the list of expenditures that –apparently through inadvertence– the seminary missionaries' salaries were not provided for. In the colony, Bienville was at a loss to explain the omission. La Vente asked the seminary directors in Paris to investigate. Elsewhere in his letter, however, lest the authorities at Court not appreciate the role of religion in its own traditional colonial policy, he spelled it out with conviction:

> Just as one can say that the progress of Religion depends a great deal on the advancement of the colony, the progress of the colony depends also on the advancement of Religion. (It is a body and a soul, which do not subsist except in the perfect union that God keeps together.) Agreement is doubtless easily found on the first point, but perhaps with difficulty will the second be accepted.[25]

To wean authorities from too temporal a view, the mission superior used a purely temporal argument, and in so doing he reaffirmed the priests' adherence to Iberville's policy.The missionary was needed not only for the internal moral health of the settlement, but also as «diplomat.» It is certain, La Vente claimed,

> that one lone missionary among a large savage nation–since they in their esteem for him look upon him as a great chief, the supreme honor among them–has enough weight to hold them to their duty, and to lead them–if his profession could permit– to war as well as to peace, and it is this that brings M.d'Iberville and *Messrs. les Officiers* to ask for the multiplication of ministers of the gospel as the means most necessary for the advancement of the colony.[26]

If there was agreement between Bienville and the seminary clergy on the importance of the role of the missionary, there was disagreement about who should fill the role. The early mutual antipathy had grown with the years. In late 1704, it was with disappointment that Bienville had seen Jesuit participation come to an end with the departure of Père Dongé. As an individual, this gentle and genial priest got along perfectly with the seminary priests, whom he had welcomed to the primitive post in 1703 and 1704,[27] and their arrival enabled him to carry out orders from Paris to leave. He sailed for Havana, where he soon died. The clergy in Mobile sincerely mourned his loss to the mission.[28] They had further reason to be sorry, for now his tempering influence on Bienville was ended. During the course of 1705, the commandant's relations with the local clergy became ever more strained.

In the spring of 1706, the Jesuit Jacques Gravier arrived from his Illinois mission in search of medical care for arrow wounds that had nearly brought him martyrdom.[29] Bienville was only too happy to settle the wounded priest in the fort and to use his services as chaplain. The official pastor and his assistant saw this as an intrusion upon their office and as a violation of the painfully arrived at agreement of 1703. To make matters worse, it seemed not accidental but planned. Not

knowing the mind of their Provincial on the evacuation of Mobile, the Illinois Jesuits had already spoken openly of accepting the invitation to furnish a chaplain to the fort; through their military role they would be canonically independent of the local pastor. Seminary missioner Bergier, who was vicar-general of the Bishop of Quebec in the Illinois area, was indignant; he fired off a letter of complaint to Bishop St. Vallier.[30] If recent reports were true, Bergier stated, the Jesuits were planning to hold a position of influence in Mobile: «Behold these Religious as vicars-general for the Governor, the King's Lieutenant, the Major, Commandants of posts, the officers, the persons of quality;[31] and Messieurs of the Foreign Missions and of the secular [clergy are] vicars-general of the shopkeepers, the bartenders and the populace. See, your Grace, whether that is all in order and in conformity with the practice of the Church.»[32]

But La Vente was not a man to yield his churchly authority to a military officer or to see his flock of two hundred souls reduced by half; he would resist. The chaplain in military service might be subject to the officer's orders, but not this pastor canonically constituted by the bishop of the diocese. Furthermore, since the fort was small, the troops did, as a matter of fact, live outside it and therefore in the parish. With canon-law precision unknown in the primitive outpost, La Vente pointed out that they therefore all fell within his jurisdiction; and therefore outside the authority of the very temporary chaplain who had been questionably introduced by the commandant. So intent was the pastor that he refused to let the chaplain give the troops their formal Easter Communion. For the sake of harmony, the Jesuit did not contest the pastor's decision, and Pontchartrain was later to voice approval of his discretion.[33]

Pontchartrain could not forget that a strikingly similar case had arisen three short years before in Acadia. When the canonical questions were brought to the court at Marly in July, 1703, point for point they had been decided in favor of the pastor and against the commandant and the fort chaplain. In summary, no act of jurisdiction or ceremony was to be performed by the chaplain outside the fort chapel, nor was he to have Mass at the same time as the parish or in any way carry on regular ministry for colonists. The government's intention was to follow canon law to the letter in preserving the authority of the pastor on whom fell the responsibility for the colonists.[34]

But the contest did not remain canonical and judicial. It descended to personal accusation and innuendo. On a suspicion fanned by Nicholas de la Salle, La Vente got word to France that Bienville was intercepting the missionaries' letters: for that reason they dared not write.[35] And so the antipathy between Bienville and the seminary missionaries increased as time went on. In prosperity and success, the two parties might have overcome their mistrust and dislike, but in the scarcely subsisting subtropical outpost, crisis succeeded crisis.

For example, the colony commander was invited to be godfather to a newborn child, but the happy event was marred when the pastor curtly announced that, because of a scandal caused by Bienville and a woman, he was obliged to refuse to baptize the child so long as it was being presented by such a disedifying godparent. Furious, Bienville tracked down this affront. In writing to the Minister, he maintained that he had proved the calumny false and that, when he asked the pastor for a public apology, La Vente retorted that a priest was not obliged to retract in such a case.[36] Whatever the case, the tag of «débauché» had now for the first time been hung

on Bienville; like Tonti, he would have difficulty shaking it off.[37]

The insulted commandant retaliated by calling up La Vente's past, and he invited the Versailles officials to look into the missionary's record. Had he not been to the Indies, and had he not been recalled? Had it not been because he was troublesome and the settlers wanted no more of him?[38] La Vente had in fact served in Ile de Bourbon, having arrived there in 1699. However, Bienville's view was inaccurate, in that La Vente had, on his own initiative, expressed his wish to leave a settlement he found dissolute, unresponsive, and antagonistic. While the priest claimed to have the affection of the good people on the island, it was nonetheless a fact that his severity and temperament and his insistence on duty had led him to clash with the governor over questions of ethics and vice.[39] At the time of his transfer to Louisiana, La Vente was considered by church authorities «a good man . . . wise and experienced.» The salary due for his brief years in the Ile de Bourbon post – but which the Royal Treasury had yet to pay – the missionary generously contributed to the new Louisiana foundation.[40]

Nor did Bienville spare M. Alexandre Huvé, the assistant pastor, who was also entrusted with the care of the Apalachee refugees, most of whom were Christians. Of not too robust a frame, this younger man had a speech defect. The rugged life was not meant for him, nor was the learning of so alien a tongue. Bienville let it be known that such men were not meant for the Louisiana missions.[41]

In the latter part of 1706, the commandant intensified his attack on the pastor. M. de la Vente, he charged, was a troublemaker who opposed him for opposition's sake and in his malice left no stone unturned to undermine his authority. Even in church, the pastor had spoken against him. Instead of using funds that Bienville claimed were in hand, La Vente was asking for a separate subsidy to roof the church. Meanwhile, on Sundays – which, because of the sabbath rest, were the regular review days for the troops – he dragged out the services in the fort chapel in a way that interfered with the order of the day. To obviate this interference, Bienville went to the point of fixing the hours of the Sunday Mass, and of locking the fort chapel to prevent the priest from changing them. But the pastor threatened to excommunicate the commandant if the officer should dare to force him back to the parish church then in disrepair.[42]

Bienville further complained of the uncharitable harassment that the wounded Jesuit had suffered at the hands of his brother priest. However, when this complaint reached the Minister of Marine, it seems that his satisfaction over the fact that the Jesuit who did not belong there had left, exceeded his regret over the lack of clerical courtesy, for Bienville's attempt to set up his own rival military chapel was against good order and the government's intentions.[43] If Gravier himself had harbored the intention of holding on to his post in the fort, the ship that brought word of the will of his king and his Provincial left him no alternative but to yield and sail for France.[44]

With his departure, the threatened teapot tempest of «sedition» and «schism» might now simmer down, for Bienville was left without an éminence grise, and La Vente was without a spiritual rival. Court and colonists might hope that with a vast continent to be explored, with thousands of souls to be evangelized, officer and priest might cease their power

struggle over a community and flock consisting of fewer than two hundred persons and fifty animals.[45] But their hopes should not have been too high, since Bienville looked upon the departing Jesuit as an ambassador who would tell Versailles how insufferable this La Vente really was, and thus strengthen his position at Court against the pastor.[46] The moment was critical, for in this autumn of 1706, in view of the recent demise of Le Moyne d'Iberville, His Majesty might well confer upon Le Moyne de Bienville the awaited installation as governor in fact and in title. However, his enemies were not idle.

Leaving the purely spiritual sphere, La Vente publicly blamed the commandant for the colony's poverty, «because he did not care» about their suffering.[47] In his role as finance officer, La Salle denounced Bienville to the ministry because of his order to pay the fort chaplaincy salary to the Jesuit Gravier. The Commissary maintained that in refusing to accept the services of M. Huvé, Bienville had gone counter to a formal order of the Court.[48] This condemnation of Bienville's lobbying for a Jesuit came not from any jealous ecclesiastic; here was a layman complaining about misuse of funds and disobedience to orders. In government eyes, these two crimes were heinous indeed.

But La Salle might have been too late for his charge to have full effect. Bienville had already notified Versailles of his displeasure with Huvé's conduct. The assistant pastor had been duly constituted fort chaplain. But it was not the presence of Huvé that annoyed the commandant; it was his absence. This chaplain would go off for ten- or fifteen-day journeys without authorization from the commandant or his adjutant. When Bienville or his second-in-command called him to task, Huvé curtly answered that as assistant pastor he intended taking orders from the pastor and no other. Indeed, according to Bienville, the military chaplain answered the adjutant that «he was not like a servant,» having to ask permission to go where he wished.[49] While the clergy had struggled from the beginning of the colony to see to it that the military did not have the authority over pastor or missionary which a commanding officer had over a chaplain, they could not have their cake and eat it too. If the fort chaplaincy was filled from the local clergy, he who held the post had to be subject to military discipline. In Versailles, when the matter came to Pontchartrain's attention, he ruled that Huvé was «obliged» to fulfill his functions, and the Minister called his infraction of regulations to the attention of the superiors at the Rue du Bac.[50]

In the colony, during a heated argument over respect for duty and the prospects of Jesuits coming, La Vente thundered at Bienville that one of the two of them would be out of the colony within a year.[51] Doubtless each hoped it would be the other's fate to be recalled, although the pastor was more and more disenchanted with his parish. Little did La Vente know how sound was his prediction, or indeed that both might be out within the year. For if the priest's accusations had stained Bienville's already tarnished reputation, his own also was fatally blemished by the commandant's persistent denunciations. In March, 1707, the seminary directors in vain submitted a report on the missionary pastor's record that was all in favor of a man portrayed as mature, moderate, successful, well behaved, and «zealous for the interests of God and the service of the King.»[52] The Minister of Marine replied to Brisacier that this portrait was indeed different from that presented by the commandant, his officers, and the colonists. Not only had all of these complained, the Minister went on, but even his clerical confreres appeared to have suffered from his ill temper. «A man of such a temperament is not

at all fit for the founding of a new colony. It seems to me you should recall him since the entire colony is aroused against him.»[53]

Feeling ran high at the seminary on receiving this missive. Had Gravier reached the Minister's ear and served Bienville well against M. de la Vente? Had one of their own men written against his superior? Those who knew La Vente personally were prepared to admit to an excessive zeal, but no more. In any case, they believed this was flagrant injustice, and since the commandant and his friends were believed to be intercepting letters, the pastor's defense was blocked. The minister of God, with care of souls, was to be recalled, while a small group of *libertins*, led by the débauché Bienville, would stay![54]

But Bienville was not to outlast La Vente in office. Even Gravier had not been able to save him. Refusing to accord the governorship to a Le Moyne, the King had chosen Nicholas Daneau de Muy, who had served in Canada. Pontchartrain informed Brisacier of the nomination and also of his recommendation to M. de Muy that he «live in true union with the Priests of the Seminary» in the colony. In turn, the Minister asked the Superior to instruct his men to render to the governor all that was due his official character and to follow his advice in the choice of places for their missionary activity. Furthermore, by their application to duty, they should merit the new governor's protection, which would be accorded whenever need should arise.[55] This exhortation to show respect to civil and military authority was the Minister's way of saying that the clergy should not imitate the behavior of the outgoing pastor of Mobile.

At the same time, Pontchartrain showed the continuity of the general official policy on the strategic value of the missions: the missionaries were to choose the sites in accordance with the mind of the governor. The Minister knew full well how far from implementation this program was. While making his own the warning of Bienville that «the savages have little respect for those who are too young or are of a somewhat weak build,» he encouraged the Superior to send many more missioners into the field.[56] At the last minute, Pontchartrain added in his own hand the brief comment that the seminary was «being paid well enough» precisely for this purpose.[57]

Hurt and troubled by this cutting remark, vexed and perplexed at receiving this veiled directive to remove La Vente, Brisacier went to Versailles to call upon the Minister in person, but found him not there; the Minister was at Pontchartrain. As a return of courtesy, Pontchartrain had Governor-elect de Muy call upon the seminary authorities at the Rue du Bac. In that meeting, as the Minister foresaw, after generalities and courtesies, the topic of the pastor was taken up. Out of the tête-à-tête came a flexible solution, which Brisacier communicated to Versailles: let M. de Brisacier empower M. de Muy, in whom the Minister had confidence, to remove M. de la Vente from office and send him home by the first ship, *if* he should judge that best; otherwise, let him keep the pastor in office and inform the Court of his reasons.[58]

Pontchartrain discussed the matter with his First Secretary, La Touche, a man devoted to the missions and to the Rue du Bac.[59] From him and from others, the Minister could have known that he was considered too much in the Jesuits' pocket. Pontchartrain did not delay in sending Brisacier a magnanimous ratification of this suggested solution. While he leaned toward removal pure and simple, he left the door ajar. In tone and content, the pious Pontchartrain tried to convey his wish that the seminary directors feel at ease with him, and his hope that Louisiana might soon find

civil and religious harmony:

> I was distressed not to have been here when you came to talk. I was very happy to send M.de Muy to you so as to win his protection for the missionaries and have him get along well with them. In regard to M.de la Vente, that (plan) seems good. It will be necessary for you to entrust (M.de Muy) with authority to send him back to France—if you judge it apropos to do so—for the good of peace and the service of the colony which ought to be the object of all those who are interested in it.[60]

When word got round of M. de Muy's nomination, of his visit to the seminary, and of the correspondence between the Minister and Brisacier. Mme d'Iberville descended in a huff upon the Rue du Bac. She was distressed to see her husband's colony pass into strange hands, and she prophesied to the bewildered M. de Brisacier that he would rue the day he had lobbied to get such a governor as M. de Muy. He would see when he got to know the man. It was rather in vain that the Superior denied having had a finger in the choice. The lady was not in a mood to believe his affirmation that the seminary had told the Minister: «if only M.d'Iberville had been there, his age, his experience, his gentleness, his piety and his equal attachment for Jesuit and for us would have held the balance even between one and the other.» Furthermore, he could assure her, on more than one occasion they had urged the promotion of M. de Longueil, her brother-in-law in Canada; they had recommended him for Louisiana in hopes that he would influence his younger brother, Bienville, and render him more capable of holding the office he occupied. The lady did not need the slur on Bienville to launch into a diatribe against La Vente, whereupon Brisacier curtly defended his confrere. Mme d'Iberville left in no better spirits than she had arrived in.[61]

Pontchartrain then drew up His Majesty's instructions for the governor about to depart for his post. Governor de Muy was ordered to consult impartial witnesses and get the truth of the matter on M. de la Vente, his deeds or misdeeds. The inquiry was to be conducted «without complaisance toward any one,» and in the same spirit, the whole truth of the case was to be relayed to the King's minister. Pontchartrain made clear to De Muy that if, as a matter of fact, the priest was «such as Bienville claimed, it would be absolutely necessary to send him home»; that, the Minister stated, was what he recommended, in case La Vente did not have «the moderation which is becoming for his role.»[62] Thus, while the Minister left the decision in the governor's hands, it is to be noted that De Muy was hereby given authorization to send the pastor home not only for misdeeds, but also for temperamental defects. Pontchartrain felt that where there was so much smoke, there must be some fire. At the Rue du Bac, however, it was felt that the flame was only a flicker, and the smoke was a screen for the commandant.

But Bienville as well was to come under the governor's scrutiny. Pontchartrain briefed De Muy on the charges. Against Bienville, there were the long-standing accusations of forbidden commercial activity and profiteering:[63] that he had shipped private merchandise for himself on the King's ships without paying for the freight and had profiteered on goods sold within the scantily supplied colony. There were also charges of cruelty: that he had ordered an Indian prisoner convicted of murder to be burned over a slow fire, in the manner of the savages. The Minister demanded an account of the incident: If true, why had the officer acted so cruelly?

Nicholas de la Salle's charge also was relayed to De Muy—namely, that Bienville had harried him and his wife, and threatened them

with violence, while «the intention of the King is opposed to all violence.»[64] These moral preoccupations are in themselves aspects of the religious outlook of Jérôme de Pontchartrain and his ministry.[65]

To Bienville himself, the Minister addressed a strongly worded demand that he answer the list of charges of tyranny and cruelty. The determined Pontchartrain «wanted to know the truth.»[66] So low was the commandant's reputation at that time, and so strong the collected suspicions against him, that De Muy was entrusted with a royal order which he could, at his discretion, serve upon Bienville—«an order of the King to Sieur de Bienville, commandant in Louisiana, to return to France.»[67] Worse still for the heir of Iberville, should the profiteering charge prove true, the captain of the *Renommée* (which had been Iberville's ship) was to carry out the «Order of His Majesty which enjoined the Captain to receive M. de Bienville on board his ship and bring him back a prisoner to France.»[68]The youthful Minister of Marine intended to be energetic and thorough. Though in the midst of war, he nevertheless intended to reform Louisiana.

He communicated confidence in the coming reform to the hapless Bishop of Quebec, still in captivity in England. He assured Mgr de St. Vallier of his conviction that M. de Muy would «put the colony on solid footing.» The bishop could take heart, for the new governor had «orders to protect the missionaries.»[69]

Before sailing in 1704, St. Vallier had confided to Pontchartrain that he felt he really needed Jesuits in the vast Louisiana section of his diocese. He thus seemed to be modifying his earlier intransigence on the question of a separate sector for the order. The Minister had asked Père de la Chaize to follow through on the cordial conversations the bishop had had with Jesuit superiors before leaving Paris.[70] All in all, however, in 1707, the Minister was perhaps not too sorry that the difficult bishop was in England rather than in Paris or Quebec.

Hearing Gravier's description of the vast terrain of the Mississippi mission field, the Jesuits realized that they had made a mistake. They had thrown away their foothold in Mobile too quickly when their 1703 demands had been refused; so birettas in hand, the fathers came begging anew to Pontchartrain, and Gravier with his martyr's wounds was first in line.

Since the war blocked communications between Quebec and the Jesuits' Illinois mission far inland, they pointed out to the Minister that «it was important . . . to have a mission [house] and a chapel at Mobile where they might say Mass, when they should be obliged to remain for a time in coming to get their provisions when ships arrive.» Friendship or no, the Minister put his foot down when he decided: A depot, yes, but «without church» attached.[71] He knew his bishop and his Jesuits; he wished to proceed with prudence.

The concession and the motive for it were explained to De Muy, who was instructed that the King «in no wise wanted [the Jesuits] to have a church in that site nor anything which would indicate an establishment, and if they want to say Mass, then they must do so in the parish or in the chapel of the fort.[72] So wary was the Minister of possible unhappy consequences that he instructed the governor not to let any Jesuit stay in Mobile longer than necessary.[73] Since there was thus no question of a church, there was no need to ask the permission of the sensitive St. Vallier; as for the transient rooms with storehouse, Pontchartrain would simply present the bishop with a *fait accompli*, but the deed would be less complete than the fathers had requested.

Pontchartrain was doubtless pleased as De Muy's ship sailed toward the Antilles en route to Louisiana with the program of reform ordained for the Mississippi colony. But the newly-appointed governor died en route in Havana;[74] 1707, year of promised reform, ran out without any radical changes in the colony. Neither commandant nor pastor was removed. They simply chose their weapons and again set to in their duel.

Nor was the small community allowed to remain neutral in the quarrel between its leaders. Bienville seems to have «permitted» a petition wherein the parishioners requested the removal of La Vente. Not to be outdone, the pastor encouraged an assembly of townspeople under the presidency of the highest *officier de plume* in the colony, Nicholas de La Salle. In this gathering, according to La Vente, the colonists disavowed their «impeachment» signatures, which, they averred, had been given under duress. Bienville reported this gathering as having a note of sedition, and at the same time as having ended in refusal to withdraw the signatures.[75]

Nevertheless, a new personality had been introduced into the colony's political drama. The same ship that, in February, 1708, brought word of the demise of De Muy also carried Martin d'Artaguiette, who was to serve as co-commissary with La Salle. The main function of the new administrator actually was to serve as sleuth for the Minister in Versailles. He took up residence with Châteaugué, and dined with the Le Moyne brothers, the better to «spy» on them.[76]

But La Salle, who used that term, should have been aware, as La Vente was, that if the inspector was thus able to observe the brothers closely, he was also in a position where he could daily hear their side of the story against commissary and pastor. However, if the investigator listened, he nevertheless kept strict control of his speech, and Bienville was annoyed at this secretiveness.[77]

In the initial hearings on La Vente's charges that Bienville had intercepted his letters, the governor came off quite well: one witness after another swore that he had never heard or known that Bienville intercepted the pastor's correspondence.[78] However, after four months of enquiry, the government's detective was only telling Pontchartrain what the Minister already knew when he wrote that «nothing can equal the dissension that exists here between M. de Bienville, Commandant [on the one hand], and Messrs. de La Vente, pastor, and de La Salle, secretary exercising the office of commissary.»[79] Yet d'Artaguiette assured the Minister that he was doing his best to find all about everything in the colony.

Pontchartrain wanted more information, but what he wanted most was a clear-cut confirmation or confutation of the myriad conflicting reports that gathered in the ministry files. At the Bureau of Colonies, Bienville's reputation had been most seriously threatened by La Vente's charge of intercepting letters. To block correspondence with the mother country was a form of tyranny the government would not tolerate. La Vente was convinced of the truth of the accusation, and abstained from writing; the very absence of his letters strengthened the belief in Paris that the commandant was abusing his authority. All was turned upside down when Bienville reported to Versailles that he possessed a certificate from the pastor's newly-arrived confrere, François Le Maire, who had observed the proper transmission of the controverted letters from one ship to another; Le Maire admitted that while hazards of the sea had caused delay, there had been no irregularity whatsoever. Furthermore, Bienville went on, the pastor now averred that the

accusation had been a brainchild born of Commissary de La Salle's suspicion:

> M.de La Vente told me in the presence of the officers, that he had made a mistake and that we must think no longer of the matter. I answered that your Excellency was informed of the matter, and that he wished to know the truth of it, and that far from remaining silent on such calumnies, I hoped to have justice, and that he must learn that persons of your rank, my Lord, were not so easy to trick as he thought, and that there was justice for the small as well as for the great.[80]

The blame thrown upon the commandant he now cast off, blame presumably shown to be nothing more than the usual political attacks of *officier de plume* against *officier d'épée*. That the pastor had descended to such politics, perennial but petty, was, Bienville suggested, to the priest's own shame.

In denouncing La Vente for his «proud spirit and troublemaking attitude,» Bienville found it politic to slip in praise for some other seminary priest. Perhaps he really feared the influence that the pastor told him his superiors had in Paris. His praise was nonetheless faint, and prejudice hedged it in with reserve. The only one of his robe among the Indians, Bienville wrote, «the Seminary Priest at the Tamarois shows zeal and merit, but he does not have the talent of teaching well, nor of winning the affection of the savages.»[81] This was faint praise indeed for M. Bergier, a man universally esteemed, even by the Illinois Jesuits, toward whom, as a seminary confrere was proud to say, he knew how to be a man of «tooth and nail.»[82]

The commandant went on to state his concern over the fact that two seminary priests delayed their departure from Mobile for mission posts in the interior. With debater's flair, Bienville complained that the seminary priests run not toward martyrdom, but away from it. He completed his taunt with the declaration that the Jesuits' behavior was the opposite. His recently-returned good friend Père Jacques Gravier he offered as an example, and mentioned that he would have the Jesuit remain «through Easter so that the whole population of the settlement could have liberty of conscience [because] no one omitted his Easter duty as long as the Jesuits had been present.[83]

Pontchartrain reacted with mixed feelings. With regard to the failings of the seminary missioners, he would inform and «stimulate» M. de Brisacier. He would pass over the praise of Jesuits without comment, but in the midst of the storms over Chinese Rites, Jansenism, ultramontanism, and «the rights of the Gallican Church,» Jérôme Phélypeaux must have smiled to hear this officer yearn for the «return to this colony of the peace which the Jesuits had always maintained there, and which M. de La Vente had banished entirely.»[84] With regard to the commandant's pastoral concern for the faithful, the Minister noted that Gravier's ministry at Easter was «good, but that this was not his assigned task.» Decidedly, the Minister would not be pleased to see the Jesuit remain in Mobile beyond the paschal season. Furthermore, on the question of reproof of licentiousness, the Minister took the side of the outspoken pastor of Mobile.[85]

Bienville had casually mentioned that, while M. de La Vente had wanted to sail to France, he had refused to let him go «since he has no order from his superiors in France, and since he holds the pastorate here»; to replace him, it would have been necessary to take a missionary away from the Indians. Pontchartrain, apparently without having his suspicions aroused, calmly answered that the superior of the seminary should be notified so as to have

the permission granted.[86] But the Rue du Bac needed no notification from the Minister: La Vente had already sent them the details of the commandant's behavior. According to the pastor, his confreres and he were convinced that a voyage to France would be his only means to solve their present problems. Both commandant and commissary had agreed to his right to make the trip. However, when La Vente boarded ship, the captain informed him that he could not take him aboard without an order from the commandant. Bienville in turn excused himself, saying he could give no such order without authorization from the Minister of Marine. The furious pastor saw that the commandant had played this trick on him because «M. de Bienville feared that [his] arrival in France would have unpleasant consequences for certain persons.»[87] Forced to yield, La Vente took the precaution of having the officials sign an affidavit of refusal. Commissary de La Salle and Captain d'Eschillais of the *Renommée* signed, but Commandant de Bienville did not. The indignant priest could now all the more easily make his point with the seminary directors on why he had to speak with authorities in Paris:

> If the Minister [of Marine] finds it normal that the disposition of the ministers of the Lord be absolutely dependent on the caprice of a governor, I see nothing in my [poor] person which does not indeed merit such punishment, but I see nothing in my role [of priest] which merits such abasement. However, if you find this proper and becoming, a single little word on your part would settle me in the most perfect submission to undergo the most rigorous chastisement I can merit. Precisely in this attitude lies the «violence» of which I am accused.[88]

At the same time that the commandant attempted to drag his opponent down to the political arena, the priest was rising to make a stand on the dignity of his office in face of the civil power. And he did so in the unctuous language of humility of the most popular ascetical writers of the day. Assuredly, the seminary directors were not about to say the word of submission; rather did Brisacier protest forthwith to the Minister of Marine. The Superior had an easy time of it in pointing out the inconsistency of the situation. If M. de La Vente's presence was damaging, what harm could come from his departure? «They should have been able to get along without him if he is as incapable and as hated by the people as [M. de Bienville] would have us believe.» The point was well scored; but the neutral observer could not have helped pitying Jérôme de Pontchartrain: fully a year before, with infinite tact, he had obtained from this same religious authority the power for the civil authority in the person of M. de Muy to revoke and expel M. de La Vente; now, in this springtime of 1708, he saw the civil authority in the person of Bienville refuse to permit the departure of La Vente without explicit permission of the religious authority in Paris. Pious though he was, the Comte de Pontchartrain might well have murmured against the Providence that had carried off M. de Muy.

Brisacier, however, did not stop there. He repeated to the Minister the alleged reason for Bienville's enmity against his confreres in Louisiana: Bienville had been reprimanded for his scandalous familiarity with an unnamed woman who, the report stated, was now dead. Neither the end of the alleged affair nor of her life had ended the commandant's bitterness.[89] Was this nothing more than the same charge of scandal which La Vente, according to the word of thwarted godfather Bienville, later retracted on discovering its falsity? The Minister could well wonder.[90] Neither before nor after this period would the colonial archives record charges of this nature against the bachelor commandant. For the Louisiana colony, Bienville was doing well.

While the Minister could thus suspend judgment on the officer's morals in the recent past, the next question raised by Brisacier called for prompt decision. At that very time, death was removing Gravier from Mobile, where he had lingered, perhaps unavoidably, for want of a convoy en route to his Illinois post.[91] However, his presence at Bienville's side had made the seminary priests suspicious that he might be the camel's nose under the tent. In addition, the pleas of the clergy for redress against constant and petty harassment made Brisacier bold enough to address an ultimatum to the Minister. If it was the government's intention to bring the Jesuits back, would the Minister be so kind as to notify the seminary so that it might recall its men? On the other hand, if it was the Minister's intention that the seminary priests remain, the superiors wanted to know when the next ship was sailing so that more missionaries might go to the aid of those already on the scene.[92] This ultimatum constituted a diplomatic and devastating element in their complaint. They knew Pontchartrain was eager to see more missionaries go to Louisiana to carry out the long-range policy of winning the natives. They knew further that if the Minister answered with the sailing date, he was implicitly promising to bring Bienville to heel and to oust the Jesuit camel from the fort chapel.

But before Pontchartrain could make up his mind, the last ship of the fall season brought new charges of commandant against pastor. La Vente was accused of using solemn spiritual penalties to satisfy his personal pique: he was said to be withholding the sacraments—as one would from the excommunicated—from anyone who would not retract his signature from the earlier petition against him. In an effort to show that the pastor was approaching the limit of normal behavior, the twenty-nine-year-old Bienville claimed that the priest rashly cried out that, although he was fifty years of age, he hoped to live long enough to see the ruin of Bienville. The commandant clucked: «Here we have, it seems to me, feelings which are not so religious.»[93]

If the alleged failings of La Vente had been purely spiritual, they might have been readily absolved in the Bureau of Colonies. But Bienville introduced the charge of a sin that was not easily pardoned (and his language gives insight on the writer and on Pontchartrain, the addressee): «I know, my Lord, that the title of poor missionary wins access to a Minister as Christian as Your Lordship, but I will with truth call to his attention the fact that few missionaries keep in mind the vows they make in France. No sooner do they arrive than they set up open shop, and buy and sell like private persons.»[94]

The commandant was probably doubtful over the real power of Abbé de Brisacier, but he was able to make a deft stroke to undermine it simply by bringing it up with a compliment for Brisacier's person. If the seminary superior's power was marginal, and if the Minister could be persuaded that the seminary authorities were exaggerating their influence at Court, this would surely weaken whatever position they had acquired. It was thus that Bienville, with one breath, made reference to the choice of the new governor—did he not hope it would be himself?—and unctuously voiced the hope that the Superior, being just, would disbelieve the charges against him. Of the accusation of commercial activity, he wrote: «It is a truth of which the governor who will come here will inform you, although these Priests publicly boast that he will be of their opinion because of the great credit of M. de Brisacier, whom I believe too just a man to give credence to what this pastor writes him against me.»[95] At the same time, the commandant adopted a tone that was half conciliatory, half ironic: he was trying to

«make this pastor happy.»[96] Frontier Canadian though he was, Bienville was shrewd in diplomacy.

Still another year went by without either man being displaced. Each still saw in the other the same faults; each still regaled weary Paris and Versailles with the same litany of accusations. Then in August, 1709, Bienville took his pen and made a double thrust which, when it struck home, proved fatal to his opponent's prestige. The commandant laid down two specific misdeeds of «this haughty and self-sufficient priest.» The missionary had sold his brandy and his wine at exorbitant prices; he had further sold off his stock of flour, and then, when no ships came, finding himself hard-pressed, he asked ten quintals from the royal warehouse. According to La Vente, Bienville at first refused to give the flour he and his confreres needed; the pastor, by appealing to the governor of Pensacola for food, shamed Bienville into according the requested supplies.[97] Bienville told the Minister that he gave it to him lest he write to Paris that the commandant was «letting him die of hunger.»[98]

In the ministry's list of heinous crimes of colonial governors, profiteering ranked not too far from treason; in a missionary, it was a worse crime still. Out of patience, Pontchartrain omitted his usual investigation before coming to a decision.

Bienville meanwhile pressed another charge. Although La Vente had for some time tried to persuade Versailles to approve marriages of Frenchmen with Indian girls, the practice was still against the specific orders of the home government.[99] Bienville had a case: the pastor had blessed the wedding of a Frenchman with a *sauvagesse*—and one of doubtful morals at that. He had done so in secrecy, without publishing the marriage banns required by Church and State. Bienville doubtless hoped that if any churchman came to the defense of the pastor's right in the matter of the sacrament, even in the face of the government's policy, he would be stumped by the canonical shortcuts and shocked by the marriage *in facie Ecclesiae* to a loose-living pagan wench.[100] Without any pause, Bienville rubbed salt into the wound: he extolled the Jesuit missions in Illinois country, without telling the Minister that the forbidden marriages were a regular practice there.

At the newly-reorganized Bureau of Colonies,[101] there was confusion over the religious and civil situation in Louisiana. No one was sure how much should be believed of what the two adversaries and their respective allies wrote; no one could with certainty sift the kernel of reality from the emotional recitals. It was difficult even to set up any sort of clear balance in favor of one or the other, so carefully did each one cancel out the other on each count. Had the seminary cast doubt on Bienville's determination? He criticized them for fleeing from martyrdom. Had the commandant questioned the pastor's respect for the Blessed Sacrament in choice and amelioration of place of cult? The pastor cited the officer as responsible for the dilapidated state of the parish church. Had La Vente once humiliated Bienville over a baptism? Bienville would use the same sacrament in an attack on La Vente. Each accused the other of distasteful abuse of delegated authority. Each accused the other of encroachment on his authority. Nicholas de La Salle, ally of La Vente, sustained the charge of misuse of funds against Bienville. Bienville accused the pastor of profiteering. The commandant claimed that the pastor admitted having erred in his accusations, and La Vente reported that Bienville was willing to retract his early charges.[102]

In the confusion, all these questions remained unsettled in 1709.[103] D'Artaguiette

had not even yet been able to file a definitive report. The Minister's letters therefore reprimanded both sides—a safe policy for any administration that hoped for reform without being able to pinpoint the guilt or make an outright decision. And once again it was resolved to remove both antagonists from office.

Thus it was that in May, 1710, Pontchartrain complained with briskness to Brisacier that his confrere in Louisiana had been selling goods, and indeed at exorbitant prices. Clearly this was against His Majesty's wishes. In addition to commerce, there were other charges against La Vente. Therefore, the Minister wrote, it is His Majesty's intention that you have him replaced by another whose probity, zeal, and disinterestedness be well known. Let me assure you, he went on, that you cannot be too attentive to the choice you make for this post.[104] This time, the Minister was determined, and he intended that the Superior of the Rue du Bac realize how serious he was; this time, there would be no compromise solution.[105]

In the same letter, Brisacier was reminded that, whereas the King wanted a goodly number of missionaries in Louisiana, the seminary at present had but a single one—a single one, the Minister meant, living among the Indians. It was necessary, the Superior was told, that he remedy this situation. Brisacier and his fellow directors winced at reading the determined message from the Minister. It was all the more humiliating in that the Rue du Bac had on occasion reproached the religious orders for buying and selling in the missions and for failure to provide adequate numbers of priests for the areas in their charge.

Five days after this rapping of knuckles, Pontchartrain turned his attention to Bienville. He wrote that while he approved the gesture of giving the pastor the ten quintals of flour from the warehouse, full payment should be exacted; the commandant was ordered to «insist on it.»[106] When the order arrived in Louisiana, Bienville could hardly have felt any repugnance in obeying it. The officer must have felt victorious when he read that «His Majesty is highly displeased with the conduct of Sieur de La Vente in selling foodstuffs, and His Majesty is taking such steps as are necessary to see that it not happen again.»[107]

On the other hand, the priest had scored with his representation to the government of the widespread licentious living in the colony. Bienville read that the King had heard of «the wanton debauchery that goes on with Indian girls,» and that indeed «in this running after slave girls, the [French] libertines sometimes [get] killed.» Perturbed by such loss of life, Versailles explained with a straight face that, «since this is altogether contrary to Religion and to the increase of the colony, I am pleased to tell you that it is the intention of His Majesty that you halt these disorders, [illegible] that you do it so effectively that no more complaints come to us on that subject.»[108]

Before this missive reached him, the commandant enjoyed a signally happy day of victory. On June 21, 1710, he watched the detested M. de La Vente board ship and sail for France. In a letter sealed and sent that very day, Bienville could permit himself a broader view. He realized the need of holding the Indians as allies; he saw the perils involved if they should become enemies. Apparently reconciled to the idea of having seminary priests carry out the task that was fundamental to the religious and diplomatic policy of the government, he expressed concern that the only missioner among a tribe had had to leave the Indians to replace the departing pastor. From Massacre Island (later Dauphine Island), he wrote:

> M. de La Vente, pastor of this parish, is sailing to France by the ship for Martinique. He is leaving his pastorate in the hands of one of these priests [of the seminary] who occupied a mission post with the Tunica nation, with the result that the gentlemen of the Foreign Missions have not a single missionary [in the field] in the whole area. It were necessary, however, that there be six or seven for the nearer nations which cannot [i.e. must not] separate themselves from us, and which eagerly ask for missionaries. I have given them encouragement in their hopes.[109]

But his lofty views would not win him the increase in salary he requested, nor even save him from the demotion implied in having a governor sent in above him.

Meanwhile, D'Artaguiette was being instructed to make a complete and decisive report on a list of questions concerning the major charges against Bienville. Before sending the list, the Minister had it read over by the Bishop of Quebec, then in Paris.[110] But the Minister did not intend to wait for an answer—which would not arrive until 1712—before sending his newly-chosen administrator to Louisiana. His concern did not admit of any delay.

As Louisiana began her second decade of existence, Pontchartrain could find little evidence that his policies were being carried out. While religion was meant to maintain morality among the population, he heard constant reports of widespread concubinage. Conscience was meant to be the guide of governors (and pastors), but he heard persistent reports of embezzlement of funds and of profiteering, and although the charity of faith should have tempered rod and crosier, the civil and religious leaders mutually condemned the other's tyrannizing. The clergy was expected to shore up legitimate authority, but the pastor's public criticism and bitter antagonism threatened to undermine the governor's authority in the suffering colony, and the commanding officer, who was expected to give good example in matters religious, did not even make his Easter duty. As for Iberville's plan of strategic missions, the Minister could find only seven priests in the whole Mississippi Valley and Gulf Coast area; not one dwelt permanently among the natives in the south.

There was a ray of hope in the fidelity of the Apalachee refugees to their Christian religion and in their early request to live alongside the French—this, in spite of the fact that no French missioner had yet learned their language. In the Illinois country, conversion to Christianity and development of sedentary agriculture were moderately encouraging, yet had not the Peoria village but recently been the scene of the near-fatal wounding of a missionary? Downriver, when seminary missioner St. Cosme was murdered, a league of tribes wrought forest justice on the guilty—evidence that almost all of the area's Indians were devoted to the French. All in all, however, the *Pax Gallica* was precarious; the *Pax Gallorum per missionarios* frankly lacked missionaries.

The Jesuits had withdrawn from the lower valley, and the seminary clergy were thinking of following suit.[111] Indeed, some reports indicated that many settlers would leave if they could. Prophet-like, La Vente pronounced judgment upon the scene. If the English should win the Choctaw—and even at the moment English gifts were circulating—they would be able to chase the French out and «end His Majesty's colony within ten years.» The pastor saw all in the light of Divine Providence: «God prefers to tolerate even heretics and infidels [to live here] rather than bad Christians who are more insufferable to

Him.»[112] If Pontchartrain's thoughts were dark, those of the directors of the Rue du Bac Seminary were little brighter. The *regnum* and the *sacerdotium* were little pleased with each other's representatives.

Yet, examining the Louisiana quarrel more closely, the authorities of Church and State saw that the conflict was not a confrontation between the two as such. It was a repetition and development of that dual polarity of political bifactionalism they had already seen. Two political factions faced each other in Louisiana, and each had its spiritual advisers. It would be an exaggeration to pretend that the ecclesiastical tensions created the political factions; it is, however, clear that the ecclesiastical bodies helped reinforce the political bifactionalism. Through their *esprit de corps* and through their confreres present in Paris and at Court, the «spiritual fathers» were able to merit the gratitude of their protégés for saying a word in their favor.

Earlier, it had been a question of pro- and anti-Cavelier de La Salle. Tonti had come close to perpetuating this theme. However, henceforward it would be pro-Le Moyne and anti-Le Moyne. Bienville and his party had their Jesuit: Nicholas de La Salle and his party had their seminary priests. There was this difference: because the personality of La Vente was much stronger than that of La Salle, it was the former who for a time stood out as main protagonist, with the latter serving as a lay éminence grise.

Between the two factions, there was no divergence on creed or code.[113] Each invoked the same doctrines and the same canons to criticize the other. Neither questioned the fundamental goals and methods of the colonial religious policy adopted earlier. There was something symbolic in Bienville's fixing the hours of Mass in the fort chapel; it did not occur to him to stop the Mass or stop going to Mass.

Some difference of opinion appeared in practical questions of public morality and interracial marriage. But the real conflict lay more in the rival talents, temperaments, characters, and families of the persons involved in the friction of their respective authority. To remedy the ills of Louisiana, therefore, the Minister of Marine looked to a change not in policy but in personnel. Death had removed Père Gravier and was about to remove Nicholas de La Salle. Pontchartrain had recently seen to the recall of M. de La Vente. Only Bienville remained.

Bienville, in this early summer of 1710 in Louisiana, felt quite confident. Little did he know that to supersede the reserved investigator whom he had learned to live with, a new personality was being groomed for the governorship of the colony, who would brush him out of the capital of the colony into the interior, and who would try to sweep the colony clean. The formidable new broom was the loquacious and irrepressible Gascon, Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac.

Notes

1. Iberville to Min., Aug. 30, 1699; in Margry, 4, 344. Iberville to Min., June 20, 1702, C13C2, ff. 43-45v. Bienville to Min., Feb. 20, 1707, C13A I, p. 29.

2. Duclos to Pontchartrain, Oct. 25, 1713, C13A 3 p. 266.

3. Gravier Extract, 1706, C13A I, pp. 573-76.

4. La Salle to Min., July 22, 1700, C13B I, No. 5. La Salle to Min., July 28, 1700, C13B I, No. 4. Min. to Bégon, June 1, 1701, AM, B^2, 154, f. 524; June 22, 1701, AM, B^2, 154, f. 642.

5. Nicholas was not a nephew of Robert Cavelier de La Salle; the nephew who accompanied the explorer was named Cavelier. Although not a kinsman, Nicholas was, like Tonti, of the «clan» which had preceded the Le Moynes into the Mississippi Valley. Cf. Paul Chesnel, *History of Cavelier de la Salle,* Andrée Chesnel Meany, trans. (New York, 1932), p. 140.

6. Bienville to Min., Feb. 20, 1707, C13A 2, pp. 26-27.

7. Erection and nomination, July 20, 1703; ASQ, Missions, No. 65. M. Giraud treats these «Dissensions intérieures» in his *Histoire de la Louisiane française, I,* 205-26.

8. Dec. 12, 1702, ASME, 344, pp. 57-62. Similarly, St. Cosme to Tremblay, Oct. 21, 1702, ASQ, Lettres, R36, p. 4.

9. Sept. 23, 1703, ASME, 344, p. 70.

10. Ibid.

11. Davion to Dirs. SME, Paris, Dec. 12, 1702, ASME, 344, p. 62.

12. Montigny, Recommendations, July 17, 1700, ASQ, Polyg. 9, No. 24. St. Cosme to Des Maizerets, Apr. 19, 1702, ASQ, Lettres, R 35, p. 1.

13. Tremblay to Des Maizerets, Apr. 2, 1701, ASQ, Lettres, O 31, p. 18. Cf. Montigny, Jan. 2, 1699, and May 6, 1699, AM, 3 JJ 387, No. 13.

14. Davion to Dirs. SME, Paris, Dec. 12, 1702, ASME, 344, p. 60.

15. Ibid., p. 61.

16. Ibid., p. 60. As for government financing, the Minister of Marine had in 1699 refused a similar assembling program for Acadia precisely because of the expense; the plan had been approved in principle, but the King could not at the time afford it (Min. to Bégon, Mar. 18, 1699, AC, B 20, f. 148v).

17. La Vente to Dirs. SME, Paris, Sept. 10, 1704, ASQ, Lettres, R 77, p. 13.

18. Bienville to Min., Sept. 6, 1704, C13A I, p. 461. La Vente to Dirs. SME, Sept. 10, 1704, ASQ, Lettres, R 77, p. 23. Charlevoix *Journal 6,* 256.

19. M.F. Boyd, H.G. Smith, and J.W. Griffin, *Here They Once Stood* (Gainesville, Fla., 1951), pp. 12-88. Moore claimed his English force was too small to be able to restrain his Indian allies from torturing captives (ibid., p. 16). M. Geiger, *Biographical Dictionary of the Franciscans in Spanish Florida and Cuba* (Paterson, N.J., 1940), pp. 4, 5, 46, 74, 83, 85-86, 89.

20. Min. to Bienville, Nov. 4, 1705, AC, B 27, ff. 193-94. *Sauvage* and *sauvagesse* were the

ordinary words used by the French to designate the Indians. Thus the word *savage* could be too harsh a translation; *les sauvages* came to have no more a pejorative connotation than «the natives.» The words *indien* and *indienne* are extremely rare in French documents, as also were *américain* and *américaine*.

21. C13A I, p. 532, with marg. note.

22. La Vente to Brisacier, Aug.-Oct., 1708, ASQ, Lettres, R 84, pp. 1-2, 2v.

23. Bienville to Min., Oct. 10, 1706, C13B, No. 6, f. 2v.

24. ibid., f. 1 and v.

25. La Vente to Dirs. SME, Paris, Sept. 10, 1704, ASQ, Lettres, R 77, p. 15.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid., p. 6.

28. Tremblay to Laval, Apr. 4, 1705, ASQ, Lettres, N 122, p. 16.

29. Bienville to Min., Oct. 10, 1706, C13A I, p. 540.

30. Apr. 15, 1705, ASQ, Lettres R 73. Against advice, the bishop had sailed for Canada and was captured by the English in late 1704. Although he continued to receive and write letters, his detention lasted until mid-1709.

31. There is double irony here: a chaplain is not a vicar general, and, normally, with secular priests present, a member of a religious order is not vicar general.

32. ASQ, Lettres R 73, p. 2. Another irritation to Bergier was the fact that, even at this late date, Bienville felt that the seminary priests should yield the Tamaroa mission (St. Cosme to Bergier, Oct. 31, 1704, ASQ, Lettres R 38, p. 1).

33. Bienville to Min., Apr. 10, 1706, C13A I, pp. 506-07, with marg. note.

34. For Acadia questions and answers, see AC, F5A 3, ff. 35v-38v.

35. Tremblay to Queb. Sem., June 18-25, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 38, pp. 13-14.

36. Bienville to Min., Apr. 10, 1706, C13A I, pp. 507-08.

37. Tremblay to Sem. Queb., Mar. 18, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 35, p. 5; June 18-25, 1707, M 38, p. 13.

38. Apr. 10, 1706, C13A I, p. 508.

39. La Vente to Dirs. SME, Sept. 6, 1699, ASME, 957, pp. 209-24; Apr. 6, 1700, ASME, 958, pp. 55-62; Aug. 13, 1700, ASME, 966 pp. 187-90; Sept. 5, 1700, ASME, 865, pp. 119-34.

40. Tremblay to Laval, June 15, 1703, ASQ, Lettres, N 121, p. 6. Tremblay to Bishop of Quebec and Dirs. Sem. Queb., Mar. 12, 1704, ASQ, Lettres, M 30, pp. 7-9. The Ile de Bourbon is present-day Réunion.

41. Bienville to Min., Oct. 10, 1706, C13B, No. 6, ff. 5v-6v; C13A I, p. 542; Feb. 20, 1707, C13A 2, p. 16.

42. Bienville to Min., Oct. 10, 1706, C13B, No. 6, ff. 3-10. C13A I, pp. 532-36. La Vente to Brisa-

cier, July 4, 1708, ASQ, Lettres, R 83, p. 7.

43. Résumé of Bienville to Min., Oct. 10, 1706, C13A I, pp. 539-40, with marg. notes.

44. Tremblay to Laval, June 18, 1706, ASQ, Lettres, N 124, p. 8. Bienville to Min., Oct. 10, 1706, C13B, No. 6, f. 8v. Tremblay to Dirs. Sem. Queb., June 18-25, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 38, p. 13.

45. Census, 1706, AC, G^1, 464.

46. Bienville to Min., Oct. 10, 1706, C13B, No. 6, f. 9v.

47. Boisbriand to Min., in résumé, Oct. 1, 1706, C13A I, p. 586.

48. Sept. 7, 1706, C13A I, p. 486. La Salle concluded his July 25, 1707, report to the Minister with «Je continuerai mes prières avec toute ma famille pour la santé et prospérité de votre Grandeur» (C13B, No. 7).

49. Bienville to Min., Oct. 10, 1706, C13B, No. 6, f. 6.

50. C13A I, pp. 537-38, with marg. notes.

51. Bienville to Min., Oct. 10, 1706, C13B, No. 6, f. 7.

52. SME mémoire, [Mar.] 1707, C11A 27, f. 41 and v.

53. Min. to Brisacier, May 25, 1707, AC, B 29, ff. 261v-62.

54. Tremblay to Queb. Sem., Mar. 18, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 35, p. 5; June 18-25, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 38, pp. 13, 15. At the Rue du Bac, there was puzzlement and disappointment that Bergier's early-1707 letter from Mobile did not give his opinion of the commandant and the pastor (Tremblay to Des Maizerets, Jan. 14, 1708, ASQ, Lettres, O 49, p. 1).

55. Min. to Brisacier, May 25, 1707, AC, B 29, f. 262 and v.

56. Ibid.

57. Tremblay to Queb. Sem., June 18-25, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 38, p. 18.

58. Brisacier to Min., June 4, 1707, C11A 27, f. 34 and v.

59. Tremblay to Queb. Sem. Dirs., June 18-25, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 38, pp. 18-19.

60. Min. to Brisacier, June 15, 1707, AC, B 29, f. 264v.

61. Tremblay to Queb. Sem., May 8, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 37, p. 4; June 18-25, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 38, pp. 16-17. Cf. Giraud, *Histoire, I*, 114, 117. While Tremblay did accuse Iberville of selfish ambition in 1700, he later felt more kindly toward him; e.g., Tremblay to Des Maizerets, June 15, 1703, ASQ, Lettres, O 39, pp. 5, 7, 16. For earlier recommendation of Longueil, see Tremblay to Glandelet, June 15, 1702, ASQ, Lettres, O 40, p. 3; Tremblay to Laval, June 15, 1703, ASQ, Lettres, N 121, pp. 13-14. Only in 1707 does the seminary feel that «the family of M. d'Iberville» is harassing its men (Tremblay to St. Vallier, Aug. 11, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, P 11, p. 6; Tremblay to Dirs. Sem. Queb., Mar. 18, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 35, p. 6).

62. «Mém. du Roy pour servir d'instructions à M. de Muy,» and the Complément thereto, June 30, 1707, AC, B 29, ff. 272v-277v.

63. On the Le Moynes' cases pending from Iberville's day, see Giraud, *Histoire, I,* 104-16.

64. «Mém. du Roy. . . M. de Muy,» June 30, 1707, AC, B 29, ff. 265v-75v.

65. See M. Giraud's significant study, «Tendances humanitaires à la fin du règne de Louis XIV,» *Revue Historique, 209* (1953), 217-37.

66. Min. to Bienville, June 30, 1707, AC, B 29, f. 280v.

67. Ordre du Roy, June 30, 1707, AC, B 29, f. 280v.

68. July 23, 1707, AC, B 29, f. 294 and v.

69. Min. to Bishop of Queb., June 29, 1707, AC, B 29, f. 30 and v. See above, p. 55n.

70. Min. to La Chaize, June 18, 1704, AM, B^2, 175, f. 624v-25.

71. Gravier to Min., Feb. 27, 1707, C13A I, pp. 578-79, with marg. note.

72. Mém. du Roy and Complément thereto, June 30, 1707, AC, B 29, ff. 273v, 277 and v.

73. Ibid., f. 277v.

74. Bienville to Min., Feb. 25, 1708, C13A 2, p. 90.

75. Bienville to Min., Feb. 20, 1707, C13A 2, p. 22. Tremblay to Dirs. Sem. Queb., June 18-25, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 38, p. 14. Dirs. SME, Paris, in résumé, 1708, C13A 2, p. 161.

76. La Salle to Min., Mar. 4, 1708, C13B, No. 8.

77. Bienville to Min., Feb. 25, 1708, C13A 2, p. 122. Gravier to Père ———, Feb. 23-29, 1708, Library of Congress, Jesuit Relations MSS, ff. 82v-83; in Thwaites, *JR, 66,* 140.

78. Procès-Verbal, Feb., 1708, C13A 2, p. 255 and ff. Gravier to Père ———, Feb. 23-29, 1708, Library of Congress, Jesuit Relations MSS, ff. 79. 82; in Thwaites, *JR, 66,* 128, 138. The procès-verbal contains similar negative testimony on the charge of burning a convicted murderer; the guilty (two or three?) had been executed by cudgel, the common method.

79. D'Artaguiette to Min., May 25, 1708, C13A 2, pp. 317-26.

80. Bienville to Min., Feb. 25, 1708, C13A 2, pp. 99-100.

81. Ibid., pp. 109-10.

82. «Il faut un homme qui ait bec et ongle comme M. Bergier» (Tremblay to Sem. Queb., June 18-25, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 38, p. 47).

83. Bienville to Min., Feb. 25, 1708, C13A 2, pp. 110-11.

84. Bienville to Pontchartrain, Feb. 20, 1707, C13A 2, pp. 28-29. While the theme is implied in the 1708 letters, this sentence had been written a year before.

85. Marginal comment on résumé of Bienville to Min., Feb. 25, 1708, C13A 2, pp. 123. 133.

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86. Bienville to Min., Feb. 25, 1708, C13A 2, p. 111. Marg. comments on résumé of same letter, C13A 2, p. 123.

87. La Vente to Brisacier, Mar. 4, 1708, ASQ, Lettres, R 79, p. 4.

88. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

89. Sém. Paris to Min., C13A 2, p. 162. Tremblay to Sem. Queb., Mar. 18, 1707, ASQ, Lettres, M 35, p. 5.

90. And even when Dame Marie Grisot added her word in calling Bienville a «débauché,» the Minister was not convinced (Pontchartrain to D'Artaguiette, May 10, 1710, AC, B 32, f. 324v).

91. Gravier died in April, 1708. Tremblay had warned M. de M[illegible] to «take care not to be prevailed upon by Father Gravier, *chef de cabale*» (Gravier to Père———, Feb. 23, 1708, Library of Congress, Jesuit Relations MSS, f. 79 and v; in Thwaites, *JR, 66*, pp. 128-30.

92. Dirs. SME to Min., 1708, C13A 2, p. 163.

93. Bienville to Min., Oct. 12, 1708, C13A 2, p. 189. There is something weird and preposterous in the charge that the pastor in the dead of winter insisted on baptizing unclothed babies out of doors (Bienville to Min., Feb. 20, 1707, C13A 2, p. 6). It is possible that he did. However, no one other than Bienville wrote of this homocidal practice. It is more likely that Bienville elaborated on given cases in which babies did die shortly after baptism. If the charge was true, psychologists must study La Vente; if not true, then Bienville could be studied. Was it not at a baptism that he had received his most cruel humiliation from the pastor?

94. Bienville to Min., Oct. 12, 1708, C13A 2, p. 189.

95. Ibid., pp. 189-90.

96. Ibid.

97. La Vente to Brisacier, July 4, 1708, ASQ, Lettres, R 83, p. 6.

98. Bienville to Min., Aug. 20, 1709, C13A 2, pp. 411-12.

99. La Vente to Brisacier, July 4, 1708, ASQ, Lettres, R 83, pp. 19-20.

100. Bienville to Min., Aug. 20, 1709, C13A 2, p. 413.

101. Duchêne, *La Politique coloniale,* pp. 34-35. Joseph de la Touche, since Seignelay's administration a faithful pivot of colony and mission, went into retirement in 1709 and died within a year. Cf. Tremblay to Des Maizerets, ASQ, Lettres, O 50, p. 18.

102. La Vente to Dirs., June 27, 1708, ASQ, Lettres R 82, p. 5.

103. And to this day!

104. AC, B 32, f. 385 and v.

105. Tremblay to Dirs. Sem. Queb., June 14, 1710, ASQ, Lettres, M 43, p. 2. While Pontchartrain did promise a future hearing for La Vente's sake, the seminary wryly wondered how and by whom it would be conducted.

106. May 10, 1710, AC, B 32, ff. 318v-19.

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid., f. 319.

109. June 21, 1710, C13A 2, p. 553. Ship sailed that day (C13A 2, p. 563).

110. Min. to D'Artaguiette, May 10, 1710, AC, B 32, ff. 321-27v.

111. La Vente to Brisacier, Mar. 4, 1708. ASQ, Lettres, R 79, p. 14. Tremblay to Glandelet, 1711, ASQ, Lettres, O 52, p. 16. Davion to [La Vente], Oct. 20, 1711, ASQ, Missions, No. 46.

112. La Vente to Brisacier, Aug.-Oct., 1708, ASQ, Lettres, R 84, p. 2.

113. There was no mention of Jansenism; there existed no «Apalachee rites.»

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PRIVATE ENTERPRISE VS. MERCANTILISM
THE CADILLAC-DUCLOS AFFAIR

By Carl A. Brasseaux

From 1664 until 1715, France relied heavily upon Jean-Baptiste Colbert's mercantilistic economic theories in shaping its colonial policies. The great French mercantilist viewed monopolistic companies as « 'armies' with which he fought his war of trade against the rest of the world.»[1] Assisted and regulated by the government, these «armies» could wage effective economic warfare from colonies to the motherland's ultimate benefit. Thus, it is hardly surprising that in 1712, after Louisiana had become a burden on the French treasury, Louis XIV transferred control of the colony to a company in the Colbert mold–the Company of Louisiana.

Like France's previous experiments in proprietary colonial rule, however, this venture failed. Major contributing factors in the firm's ultimate insolvency were the efforts of the colony's newly-appointed administrative chief, Jean-Baptiste du Bois Duclos, to engage in contraband commerce with the Spanish ports of Vera Cruz, Havana, and Pensacola–thereby undermining the company's efforts to establish itself in these ports–and to channel governmental funds into his private coffers. These activities of Duclos, which have not been studied hitherto, deprived the proprietary regime of vital revenue and contributed to its collapse.

The proprietary regime was established in 1712 when Louis XIV devised a scheme for transferring the financial burden of maintaining the strategic, but unprofitable, colony of Louisiana from the exhausted treasury to his wealthy financial secretary, Antoine Crozat, baron de la Fauche.[2] Negotiations were conducted for the Crown by Antoine Laumet, alias Lamothe Cadillac,[3] the former commandant of Detroit, who, with a Gascon's «characteristic penchant for exaggerating the truth,» painted «such a seductive picture. . . of the mining future of Louisiana that the financier [Crozat], still reticent in June, 1712, finally agreed two months later» to become the colony's proprietor.[4] In order to finance the venture, Crozat organized the Company of Louisiana which, in addition to the abovementioned financier, consisted of Le Bart and Cadillac,[5] Louisiana's future comptroller and governor. Louis XIV formally acknowledged the company's proprietary rights in Louisiana through letters patent issued in mid-September granting the firm a fifteen-year monopoly on the province's commerce and natural resources.[6] The Crown, however, retained appointive privileges for colonial officials and exercised this prerogative by reaffirming Cadillac's 1710 appointment as governor of Louisiana[7] and by naming Duclos *commissaire-ordonnateur.*

Jean-Baptiste du Bois Duclos, sieur de Montigny, a twenty-nine-year-old Dunkirk commissary, had applied for an administrative position in Louisiana sometime before August 11, 1712.[8] Duclos' request was granted on December 24, 1712, probably because of his participation in trading expeditions to Caracas, Portobello and Peru, as well as his fluency in Spanish.[9] Such experience and language skills would be indispensable in the establishment and maintenance of the anticipated and potentially profitable Louisiana-Mexican trade upon which the Company's economic fortunes hinged.[10]

After notifying Duclos of his appointment as Louisiana's first *commissaire-ordonnateur* on December 1, 1712, comte Jérôme Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain, Minister of Marine, forwarded royal instructions for the young and inexperienced bureaucrat.[11] These directives enjoined Duclos to «give the director, clerk, or agents of said sieur Crozat all of the support which they will need in commerce, the discovery and exploitation of mines and minerals, and the clearing and development of lands.»[12] Moreover, Duclos was to maintain the royal warehouse, a storehouse of munitions and provisions for the province's meager garrison, and to ensure that the troops received their proper rations.[13] Finally, the Crown commissioned Duclos first judge of the Superior Council, the colonial equivalent of French *parlements*, which was being established in Louisiana on a three-year trial basis.[14]

Upon receipt of his commission, Duclos departed Paris for Port Louis, a Breton port in which *Le Baron de la Fauche*, Crozat's Louisiana-bound frigate, was being outfitted. There, the *ordonnateur* visited Jean-Baptiste Martin D'Artaguiette Diron, «a naval commissary» who had recently returned from Louisiana, to determine «the manner in which they live there, what is necessary to have provisions there, and if existing lodging is available there.»[15] According to Duclos, his host indicated that, in order to survive in that underdeveloped province, one must not only take along a quantity of flour, wine and brandy, colonial supplies of which were practically nonexistent, but also substantial quantities of «merchandise, especially haberdasheries,» which served as currency in Louisiana.[16] Duclos leapt at the opportunity to ply his mercantile profession, purchasing linen and haberdasheries valued at «five to six thousand francs» for subsequent sale in Louisiana.[17]

Duclos' actions, which obviously violated the Company's commercial monopoly, were vehemently protested to Pontchartrain by Crozat's Port Louis agents, especially Captain de la Jonquière, skipper of the *Baron de la Fauche*.[18] Crozat himself petitioned the Minister of Marine for a decision in the matter.[19] Only by persuading Pontchartrain that his cargo of trade items was «absolutely necessary for [his] establishment and subsistence there [in Louisiana] did Duclos avoid disciplinary action, but, in allowing him to transport his wares to Louisiana aboard the *Baron de la Fauche*, Pontchartrain warned the *ordonnateur* that all commercial rights within the colony were reserved by Crozat.[20]

Despite Pontchartrain's directives, Duclos was subsequently subjected to harassment by both Company and royal officials at La Rochelle, where Crozat's ship took on provisions, and at Brest, to which the *Baron de la Fauche* had been driven by contrary winds following its departure from the Breton port.[21] The feud between Duclos and Crozat's agents was fuelled by the *ordonnateur's* successful efforts to transport to the West Indies additional trade goods–seven casks of wine, eight packs of Rouen and Breton cloth, and four packs of haberdasheries–aboard the *Baron de la Fau-*

che.[22] Some of the goods were consigned to Cap Français and Havana merchants for sale when the Crozat ship put into these ports in late April and early May, 1713. The remaining goods–except for five casks of wine which were lost through leakage or spoilage–were transported to Mobile where Duclos arrived in early June.[23]

Duclos' cache of goods and his inclination to engage in commerce with the Spanish outposts of Vera Cruz and Pensacola brought the *ordonnateur* into direct conflict with Cadillac who, as the Company's chief Louisiana representative, received a 3.5 percent commission on all goods sold from the firm's Mobile warehouse.[24] The spark of animosity between the two men, which had been glowing brightly since Cadillac warned Duclos during the trans-Atlantic crossing that arguing with him was dangerous because of the former's superior intelligence,[25] burst into flame in October, 1713. In a letter dated October 29, the *ordonnateur* sharply criticized the governor's futile effort to open trade with Mexico, the ports of which had been closed to French shipping by the Treaty of Utrecht and the emergence of a monopolistic Mexican mercantile company. As the prospects of opening trade with that Spanish province were at best bleak, Duclos recommended a partial revocation of the Company of Louisiana's commercial privileges. The execution of this proposal would afford «an intelligent person fluent in Spanish»–himself of course–an opportunity to persuade Vera Cruz merchants that they could obtain goods more cheaply in Louisiana than they could from the exclusive Mexican mercantile company. The Company of Louisiana would retain a monopoly on the importation of European goods into Louisiana; thus it would not be adversely affected by private enterprise.[26]

As Cadillac, Pierre Derigoyen and Le Bart, Company representatives at Mobile, were incapable of undertaking this mission, the *ordonnateur* recommended that they be recalled and that he be given sole «charge of his [Crozat's] affairs.»[27] Duclos would then sail to Vera Cruz under the pretext of obtaining provisions for the garrison. Having conversed with Mexican merchants, the *ordonnateur* would search the Gulf Coast «for some bay or roadstead beyond sight of the Spaniards, where we could unload merchandise, if I cannot persuade them to obtain them here.»[28]

Cadillac retaliated by informing Pontchartrain that Duclos' request to sail the company brigantine to Vera Cruz was self-serving, as the *ordonnateur* actually sought to sell the remainder of his Breton cloth and 3,000 deer pelts to Mexican merchants. Director Derigoyen, on the other hand, reported that Duclos refused to place his goods in the Company warehouse, «pretending that His Excellency, comte de Pontchartrain, must decide that matter.» The *ordonnateur*, moreover, prevented the Company director from inspecting the goods which he had imported from France.[29]

Duclos' working relationship with the local company hierarchy continued to deteriorate. In fact, his relations with Cadillac became so strained that, on October 25, 1713, Duclos asked to be reassigned.[30]

The intragovernmental feud soon touched all facets of colonial life, including the Superior Council which was established in February, 1714 after several weeks of wrangling by the governor and *ordonnateur*, apparently concerning appointments. Staffed primarily by Duclos' cronies,[31] the Council served as the chief administrator's political tool in his campaign to bring private enterprise–his own mercantile venture–to proprietary, mercantilistic Louisiana. Duclos had found an ally in

Bienville who was also Cadillac's enemy and, while serving as acting governor, had allegedly supplemented his meager salary on several occasions both by selling royal goods to the local population for his own profit and by smuggling merchandise to Havana and Vera Cruz. In late 1713, Duclos and Bienville attempted to get legal sanction for their contraband trade with Spanish Pensacola. They secretly persuaded several prominent colonists to present the Council a petition «entirely destroying Mr. Crozat's trade.»[32] According to Cadillac, this document

> demanded, among other things, that all sorts of nations be free to come and trade in this country, as they themselves [the colonists] could go anywhere there seemed to be no government; and that Mr. Crozat's director be allowed to sell Company merchandise only in quantity, not piecemeal, wanting him to give them this merchandise at fifty percent of the retail price. This petition contained several other absurd demands.[33]

Only by personally intimidating the petition's bearer, Nicolas Miragouin, did Cadillac foil the Duclos-Bienville conspiracy.[34]

Cadillac's tactical victory did not compel Duclos to strike his colors. On the contrary, the *ordonnateur* resumed his campaign to sell his wares to Spanish merchants by insisting that the royal warehouses were exhausted, thus shifting the burden of the garrison's support to the Company.[35]

Having forced the Company into the unpalatable position of supporting the garrison and thus sharply curtailing its meager profits, Duclos futilely attempted, probably in early November, 1713, to persuade Cadillac to allow him to purchase, at his own expense, six month's provisions at Havana; these goods would obviously be sold to the proprietary regime. The *ordonnateur* insisted that his arrangement was the Company's only viable alternative to the tremendous expenses incumbent upon outfitting a ship in Louisiana and the dearness of goods at Vera Cruz.[36] Cadillac adamantly refused to consider Duclos' offer, and secretly issued orders ensuring that the *ordonnateur* would not implement his designs.[37] His plans once again foiled by the governor, Duclos dispatched a brigantine in late November to purchase corn from Indians residing along the Mississippi.[38]

Cadillac consistently refused Duclos' appeals to send the brigantine to Vera Cruz, Havana and Léogane, ordering the *ordonnateur* to support the garrison with the above-mentioned corn and a small supply of flour brought to the colony in late 1713 by the *La Louisiane*, a Crozat frigate.[39] As the supplies of corn--which had mysteriously dwindled from 300 to 100 barrels[40]--and flour fell far below the garrison's requirements, however, Duclos badgered Cadillac with demands for supplies. The latter finally acquiesced, permitting his nemesis to outfit the brigantine for Vera Cruz at Company expense and approving the *ordonnateur's* selection of Ensign Antoine Lemoyne de Châteauguay,[41] Bienville's younger brother, as commander of the expedition.[42]

Following Châteauguay's departure in late January, Duclos permitted his partner, Bienville to sell for cash a large quantity of maize--apparently the missing provisions--to the commandant of Pensacola, despite the fact that the Mobile garrison's supplies were dangerously low.[43] In fact, on May 15, 1714, Cadillac was compelled to order the troops to «seek their livelihood as best they could.»[44] The problem was compounded when Duclos presented the Viceroy of Mexico with a bill

for the three-month supply of maize received by the Pensacola commandant, thus precipitating an investigation by the Mexican government.[45]

Louisiana's boiling political cauldron did not go unheeded by Pontchartrain who strongly reprimanded Duclos and Cadillac for their lack of cooperation in a letter dated January 19, 1715.[46] Crozat reacted differently to the intragovernmental feuding. Duclos' breach of the Company's commercial monopoly undermined any chance the proprietary regime might have had of realizing profits from trade with Spanish Vera Cruz and Pensacola because the *ordonnateur* thus furnished the Spaniards with an alternate and more convenient source of supply. Thus, when the colony failed to provide critical revenue by early 1713, Crozat curtailed operating expenses by disregarding a clause in the letters patent requiring the Company to send annually to Louisiana two shiploads of supplies, trade goods, and settlers.[47]

Crozat's neglect of the colony, especially the curtailment of trade-good shipments, compelled Cadillac to shift his attention from commercial matters to discovery and development of the province's mineral resources.[48] The governor secretly departed Mobile for Illinois on February 2, 1715 and returned to the provincial capital eight months later with «several metallic stones of little value.»[49] Duclos and Bienville, acting governor during the Gascon's absence, held a free rein over the colony during the interim.

Following Cadillac's return to Mobile in October, 1715,[50] the governor and *ordonnateur* established a fragile truce in conformity with Pontchartrain's severe reprimand. Hostilities resumed, however, when Cadillac charged, in January, 1716, that Duclos had intentionally misrepresented the number of artisans and soldiers in the royal service in order to augment his salary.[51] For example, according to the governor, «*said gentleman commissary* [Duclos] *wishes to perform miracles here. He does not multiply loaves, but men,* wanting to make a single person, François La Violette, a sailor, a baker, and a soldier.»[52] While Cadillac willingly conceded that a man could fill three positions, he vehemently denied that an individual thereby assumed three separate identities–the means by which the *ordonnateur* had trebled the number of artisans on the colony's payroll.[53] In addition, payrolls for the colonial garrison had been similarly inflated. Although the number of troops dwindled as a result of desertion from sixty-seven men in October, 1713 to fifty in September, 1715, Louisiana's military payroll included «some one hundred men–two hundred after 1714.»[54] Duclos naturally denied the charges.[55]

The persistence of Louisiana's intragovernmental feud in the face of the official reprimand intensified Crozat's frustration at the colony's failure to generate profits.[56] Thus, in early 1716, the Company's chief stockholder petitioned the comte de Toulouse[57] for the recall of Duclos and Cadillac. Dismissal of the former was to be based on his departure from France «with much merchandise and a resolute determination to thwart the establishment of the Company....» Crozat's petition was approved on March 3 by the Council of Marine, «one of six Councils established for the direction of affairs in the realm» following Louis XIV's death in September, 1715.[58] Letters of recall, however, were not issued until October 28, 1716.[59]

Duclos and Cadillac's joint dismissal concluded a bitter feud which was, in essence, a struggle between the champions of mercantilism and private enterprise. Prominent Louisiana officials had privately engaged in commerce with Mexican, Cuban and Florida mer-

chants and military officials in defiance of French mercantilism since the colony's inception. Thus, by selling his own merchandise to Spaniards at Vera Cruz and Havana, Duclos was merely emulating Iberville, Bienville and D'Artaguiette. Revenues generated by this contraband trade were augmented through defalcation of royal funds and mismanagement of the provincial warehouse--a seamy form of private enterprise widely practiced by eighteenth-century French colonial bureaucrats.

The establishment of the Company of Louisiana and Cadillac's zealous efforts to enforce the firm's exclusive privileges ran counter to provincial tradition and brought the governor into conflict with the *commissaire-ordonnateur*. Because the Treaty of Utrecht and the establishment of an exclusive Mexican mercantile company closed Spanish colonial ports to French shipping, Crozat attempted to entice Mexican merchants to purchase Company of Louisiana merchandise in Mobile. Duclos and his commercial associate, Bienville, effectively undermined the governor's efforts by smuggling contraband goods into Vera Cruz and Pensacola. Furthermore, by persuading the populace that the Company's commercial monopoly was detrimental to their interests, the smugglers sabotaged the colonial proprietors' mercantile privileges. By thus depriving the Company of vitally needed revenue, the *ordonnateur* doomed the firm to certain failure in 1717. Crozat acknowledged this fact in petitioning the Crown to resume control of Louisiana in January, 1717.

> He [Crozat] has actually advanced the Company of Louisiana 800,000 francs without receiving in return any merchandise or money as a result of the ill will of the royal officers there, particularly sieurs de la Motte (sic) Cadillac, governor, and Duclos, the *ordonnateur*, who were filled with a desire to profit individually from everything that we could undertake in that colony [Louisiana] and who only think of themselves without concerning themselves with either the King's interests or benefitting the nation's commerce.[60]

Notes

1. Charles Woolsey Cole, *Colbert and a Century of French Mercantilism*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), I475; II, 1-321.

2. A Toulouse native, Antoine Crozat, *fils*, was born to Antoine Crozat, *père*, and Catherine de Saporta in 1655. At the age of twenty, the younger Antoine entered the bureau of Reich de Pennautier, treasurer of the *Etats du Languedoc*. Crozat subsequently replaced Pennautier as bureau chief and became personally involved in «numerous commercial, maritime, industrial and financial affairs.» Around 1695, he abandoned his Languedoc estate for landholdings in Brittany, Lorraine and Champagne. After serving in the late I690's as extraordinary general treasurer for the war effort, the Toulouse native became a member of the Compagnie des Indes, and through his association with this mercantile firm, he outfitted commercial expeditions to Arabia and China. At the time of his death in early June, 1738, Crozat was the wealthiest man in France.

   Dictionnaire de Biographie Française (Paris: Librairie Letorizey et Ane, 1961), LIII, 1310.

3. Antoine Laumet, alias Lamothe Cadillac, was born at St. Nicolas de la Grave, Montauban, France on March 5, 1658. As his father's estate had been squandered by an elder brother, Cadillac was compelled to seek his fortune in the French army, which he joined as a cadet in 1677. In 1683, he entered the «marine companies» of Canada. Eight years later, he was promoted to captain in 1691. Between 1694 and 1697, Cadillac commanded the Michillimackinac post. In 1701, the Gascon founded Detroit; during the following three years, he ruled the post with an iron hand, thus precipitating innumerable conflicts with his subordinates. In 1710, he was commissioned governor of Louisiana.

   Agnes C. Laut, *Cadillac: Knight Errant of the Wilderness, Founder of Detroit, Governor of Louisiana from the Great Lakes to the Gulf* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1931), pp. 44-52, Marc de Villiers du Terrage, *Les dernières années de la Louisiane française* (Paris: E. Guilmoto, 1904), p. 15.

4. Marcel Giraud, *A History of Louisiana*, Vol. 1: *The Reign of Louis XIV, 1698-1715*, trans. by Joseph C. Lambert (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), p. 249.

5. Cadillac joined the Company in October, 1712. Giraud, *A History of French Louisiana*, I, 250.

6. Letters patent for the commerce of Louisiana, September 14, 1712. France. Archives Nationales, Archives des Colonies, Series A (Actes de pouvoir souverain), volume 22, folios 2-4. Hereafter cited as AC, A, with volume and folio numbers.

7. Commission of Lamothe Cadillac as governor of Louisiana, May 5, 1710, AC, A 22:9.

8. Jérôme Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain to Jean-Baptiste du Bois Duclos, December 1, 1712. France. Archives Nationales, Archives des Colonies, Series B (Correspondence envoyée, ordres du roy), volume 34, folio 138vo. Hereafter cited as AC, B, with volume and folio numbers. Duclos to Maurepas, March 15, 1713. France. Archives Nationales, Archives des Colonies, Series C 13a (Louisiane: Correspondence générale), volume 3, folio 100. Hereafter cited as AC, C 13a, with volume and folio numbers. Letters conferring on Duclos the office of first councilor of the Superior Council, December 24, 1712. AC, A 22:14.

Dunbar Rowland and Albert Godfrey Sanders, eds., *Mississippi Provincial Archives,* 3 vols., (Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1927-1932), II, 175. Hereafter cited as *MPA,* with volume and folio numbers.

9. Duclos to Pontchartrain, October 29, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:311-317: Duclos to Pontchartrain, October 25, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:197-197vo, 200.

10. The first project undertaken by Cadillac following his arrival at Mobile was the establishment of trade with Vera Cruz and Pensacola. His efforts failed because of the Pensacola commandant's hostility, the Company's exorbitant prices and the establishment of an exclusive Mexican mercantile company. See Giraud, *A History of Louisiana,* I, 301. Duclos to Pontchartrain, July 10, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:113;122. Duclos to Pontchartrain, October 29, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:311-317.

11. Duclos had been commissioned *commissaire ordinaire* at Dunkirk on August 7, 1707; prior to his appointment as *ordonnateur* in 1712, however, he had not held an executive position. Jean Favier, archivist at the Archives de France, to Carl A. Brasseaux, November 28, 1977. Letter in the author's possession. Hereafter cited as Favier letter. Duclos to Pontchartrain, October 25, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:200-201. Duclos to the Council of Marine, June 26, 1716. AC, C 13a, 4:720-721.

12. Duclos' instructions, December 18, 1712. AC, B 34:148-148vo.

13. Matters involving «the administration of royal funds, commerce,» police and land grants were to be resolved jointly by the *ordonnateur* and governor. Cadillac, on the other hand, had exclusive jurisdiction over military and Company matters, as well as Indian diplomacy. 147vo-156.

14. In addition to Duclos, the colony's judicial body consisted of Cadillac, Jean-Baptiste Lemoyne de Bienville, two additional councillors and an attorney general to be selected by Duclos and Cadillac, and a notary. Letters commissioning Duclos first councillor of the Superior Council, December 24, 1712. AC, A 22:12vo-14.

15. Duclos to Pontchartrain, March 15, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:100.

16. *Ibid.,* 101.

17. *Ibid.,* 102.

18. *Ibid.,* 97-107.

19. Pontchartrain to Duclos, January 28, 1713. AC, B 35:320-320vo.

20. *Ibid.,* Duclos to Pontchartrain, March 15, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:104.

21. Pontchartrain to Duclos, January 28, 1713. AC, B 35:321.

22. Duclos to Pontchartrain, July 20, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:141-148.

23. *Ibid., MPA,* III, 176. Extracts of letters written to Crozat in late October, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:359-360.

24. *MPA,* III, 176-177. Giraud, *A History of Louisiana,* I, 250.

25. Yves Zoltvany, «Antoine Laumet,» Dictionnaire Biographique, II, 366-372.

26. Duclos to Pontchartrain, October 29, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:315-317.

27. *Ibid.*, 315.

28. *Ibid.*, 316vo.

29. Extracts of letters written to Crozat in late October, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:351-361.

30. Duclos to Pontchartrain, October 25, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3:200.

31. For example, Storekeeper Poirier, with whom Duclos had been residing since his arrival at Mobile, was appointed attorney-general, the Council's second most powerful position. According to Cadillac, Duclos and Poirier were «associated in some commercial undertaking.» *MPA*, II, 189. Cadillac to Pontchartrain, February 20, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:429.

32. *MPA*, II, 190. Giraud, *A History of French Louisiana*, I, 124. Cadillac to Pontchartrain, February 20, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:447.

33. Cadillac to Pontchartrain, February 20, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:447.

34. *Ibid.*, 448-449.

35. *Ibid.*, 452.

36. Duclos to Pontchartrain, May, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:561-563.

37. *Ibid.*, 564, 566-567.

38. According to Duclos, the brigantine returned to Mobile in late January, 1714 with only 100 of the anticipated 300 barrels of maize. Cadillac, on the other hand, insisted that the balance had been sold to Spaniards at Pensacola.

Ibid., 568. Cadillac to Pontchartrain, February 20, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:452. See below, number 39.

39. Duclos to Pontchartrain, May, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:569-600.

40. The brigantine's skipper had been ordered to acquire 300 barrels of maize, but only 100 reached the royal magazine. *Ibid.*, 569.

41. Cadillac had alienated Châteauguay by commandeering his Mobile residence in June, 1713. *MPA*, II, 195.

42. Duclos to Pontchartrain, May, 1714, AC, C 13a, 3:565-587, 605-606. Cadillac to Pontchartrain, May 10, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:479. Cadillac to Pontchartrain, September 10, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:513-516.

43. Glenn R. Conrad, ed., *The Historical Journal of the Establishment of the French in Louisiana*, trans. by Joan Cain and Virginia Koenig (Lafayette, La.: The University of Southwestern Louisiana History Series, 1971), p. 89. Cadillac to Pontchartrain, September 10, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:513-514.

44. Cadillac to Pontchartrain, September10, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3:513-514.

45. Duke de Linares, the Mexican viceroy, sent a representative to Mobile to investigate the matter. *Ibid.*, 516.

46. This letter is no longer extant. See Duclos to Pontchartrain, September 8, 1715. AC, C 13a, 3: 792-793.

47. Giraud, *A History of French Louisiana*, I, 290.

48. The reader will recall that the Company of Louisiana held a fifteen-year monopoly over the exploitation of Louisiana's mineral resources. Letters patent for the commerce of Louisiana, September 14, 1712. AC, A 22: 2-4.

49. Conrad, ed., *Journal*, pp. 89-90. 93. *MPA*, III, 181-190.

50. Cadillac failed to notify Bienville, his immediate subordinate, of his departure or whereabouts until April. *MPA*, III, 181-190.

51. Cadillac to the Council of Marine, January 23, 1716. AC, C 13a, 4: 541-558. Giraud, *A History of French Louisiana*, I, 307-308.

52. Cadillac to the Council of Marine, January 23, 1716. AC, C 13a, 4: 547.

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*, 548. Giraud, *A History of French Louisiana*, I, 307-308. Duclos to Pontchartrain, December 25, 1715. AC, C 13a, 3: 816-817. Memoire in response to Duclos' instructions, July 15, 1713. AC, C 13a, 3: 128. Duclos to Pontchartrain, May, 1714. AC, C 13a, 3: 593-594. *MPA*, II, 199, 213, 214; III, 185.

55. Duclos to Pontchartrain, September 8, 1715. AC, C 13a, 3: 791-814.

56. By 1717, Crozat had lost 1,250,000 *livres* on his Louisiana venture. *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française*, LIII, 1310.

57. Council of Marine to Cadillac and Duclos, November 3, 1715. AC, B 3: 285. Crozat to Comte de Toulouse, 1716. AC, C 13a, 4: 1017-1032.

58. The Council of Marine was established on September 10, 1715, nine days after Louis XIV's death. It consisted of Comte de Toulouse, Maréchal d'Estrées and La Chapelle, the Council's secretary.

59. Unlike Cadillac, Duclos' career in public service was not terminated by his recall. The former Louisiana *ordonnateur* was appointed commissary at St. Domingue (present-day Haiti) on August 7, 1717; first councillor of the Superior Councils at Cap Français and Léogane, September 22, 1720; commissary general for St. Domingue, March 15, 1726; and intendant, April 21, 1729. Duclos retired from the colonial service in February, 1735, and died at Léogane on December 2, 1737. Favier letter. Council of Marine to Duclos, October 28, 1716. AC, B 38: 326. Council of Marine to Cadillac, October 28, 1716. AC, B 38: 326.

60. Crozat to Admiral de Bourbon (January 11), 1717. AC, C 13a, 5: 297-298.

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THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL IN COLONIAL LOUISIANA

By James D. Hardy, Jr.

> «We, Louis, by the Grace of God, King of France . . . do establish and create . . . in the province of Louisiana, a Superior Council, similar to those that are in the other colonies subject to us . . . »[1]

This new institution, which ended purely military rule in the infant colony, was the first major attempt to stabilize the legal administration of Louisiana. Created in 1712, at the end of the War of the Spanish Succession, when Louis XIV could once again give proper attention to his colonies, the Superior Council was to include the governor, commissioner,[2] attorney-general,[3] and several appointed councillors chosen from the leading citizens of Louisiana.[4] The councillors served by virtue of a royal commission.[5] During the period of commercial monopoly, an agent, first of Antoine Crozat and then of the Company of the Indies, served on the council.[6] Initially established for three years only, the Superior Council was made permanent in 1716, because the king deemed it «conducive to the good of our service, and to the interest of the colony . . .»[7] Again, in 1719, changes were made, this time to fit the interests of John Law's Company of the Indies;[8] but the basic pattern of 1712 was retained, and the Superior Council remained the judicial center of Louisiana.

The powers specifically attributed to the council by royal edict were judicial. The Superior Council was to «decide in the last resort and without appeal, all contests, cases and controversies between our subjects and all other persons in the said colony . . .»[9] As a court, the Superior Council had several basic functions. It administered civil and criminal justice, both in the first instance and by appeal. In civil matters the concurrence of three councillors was required for decision; in criminal cases, five. Aside from judgments, the Superior Council assumed responsibility for notarial and registry functions, and, in the absence of lawyers, its members often acted as general legal advisors for the colonists. Louisiana notaries were required to file their archives with the Superior Council, and the New Orleans notary sat with the council; hence, the government was cognizant of marriages, wills, and property transfers.[10] Thus the Superior Council's competence followed the traditional French pattern, including both the administration of the law and judicial decision.

The law the councillors were to administer and enforce was the *Coutumes de Paris*, the codified customary law of Paris and the Ile-de-France. Basically feudal in origin, the *Coutumes de Paris* by the eighteenth century included a generous admixture of municipal,

administrative, and Roman law with its feudal elements. Along with the customary law of Paris, the councillors had to deal with royal legislation. The king's statutes superseded the customary law, and there was a large body of legislation that applied to the colonies.[11] Most, of course, pertained to commerce or slavery, but there were also edicts that dealt with marriage and family trusteeships.[12] This welter of statute and customary law required an expert to interpret it, and the attorney-general, trained in France, provided the necessary legal advice to councillor and citizen alike. The councillors and the notary, therefore, were able to know and supervise the entire colonial legal system, and the Superior Council was well suited to be the colony's court.

I

Of all the functions of the Superior Council, general legal administration occupied most of its time. A great deal of this activity was registry work, since the colonial notary sat on the Superior Council. The *Coutumes de Paris* were quite specific on the need for a notary to draw and sign wills, property deeds, and contracts of marriage and business. Documents concluded without notaries and proper witnesses were automatically suspect at law. Thus the councillors were drawn into much routine and unspectacular legal work, but this was absolutely necessary to the efficient operation of colonial justice. It also demonstrated how close the Superior Council was to the people and how important were its duties. In a typical year, 1744, the councillors spent well over half their time on the routine administration of the law, rather than in judicial investigation or decision.[13]

Notarial and registry functions covered a multitude of problems and situations. One was power of attorney. In a land as vast as Louisiana, powers of attorney were indispensable in keeping personal affairs in order. Drawing up these documents fell to the notary, and registry of them to the Superior Council. For example, on January 1, 1746, the commandant of Natchitoches, Cezard (Cesar?) de Blanc, assigned to his wife, Elizabeth Guiot, a full power of attorney. As an officer, with some experience in these matters, de Blanc had Nicolas Henry, the notary, draw up his document, and councillors Augustin Chantalou, the sheriff, and Marin Lenormant, the deputy, sign as official witnesses.[14] The document then passed into the council records. Powers of attorney were also required for business. On April 22, 1744, Antoine Coquille, a merchant of New Orleans, empowered Jacques Peres to collect for him 147 *piastres* from the governor of Pensacola. Like de Blanc, Coquille had the elementary good sense to execute his document before the notary, Henry, and Councillor Chantalou, and have it registered with the Superior Council.[15]

Commercial agreements also required the notary and witnesses. On August 13, 1744, Paul Rasteau gave Louis Pierre Senet a blank procuration to collect Rasteau's debts from Tiberge and Pertuy. Senet was to resort to any litigation that might be necessary. Paul Rasteau was an experienced Protestant businessman from La Rochelle, and he neglected none of the elementary rules. The notary, Henry, drew the document up, and Sheriff Chantalou witnessed it. The power of attorney then went into the Superior Council archives.[16] A similar procuration had been registered three days earlier. Joseph Assailly, a New Orleans merchant involved in the d'Asfeld concession, constituted Jean Baptiste Prevost, agent for the Company of the Indies, to collect all debts due him (Assailly) in Louisiana, and to pay out «all accounts as may be necessary . . .» As Assailly was leaving on business for St. Domingue, he also transferred to Prevost powers of attorney given him by a ship

captain, Lemoine, and by a Sieur Jung. Like Rasteau, Assailly had Henry draw up the power of attorney, and Sheriff Chantalou witnessed it.[17] Although both Senet and Prevost went to law on behalf of their clients, the procurations given them were never challenged, and the cases proceeded as if the principals had been there in person.

Perhaps the most important documents submitted to the Superior Council for registry were marriage contracts.[18] Both the *Coutumes de Paris* and royal statute dealt quite specifically with marriage. According to the customary law, marriage created a community of both debts and *acquets*, and the terms of the *contrat de mariage* needed to be absolutely clear. The disposition of the wife's dowry, which the husband could use only under restricted conditions, had to be determined. The husband's obligations to his parents or relatives had to be stated.[19] To leave these things to chance simply invited lawsuits. Marriage was not only a civil contract, it was also a religious ceremony; since 1685 there had been but one legal religion in France, the Roman Catholic, and no marriages were valid unless performed according to its rites. In 1724 this stricture was repeated in the edict summarizing the laws against the Protestants.[20] In colonial Louisiana, because of the shortage of priests, and distances between population centers, as well as the relatively large number of Protestants, the religious requirements of marriage were sometimes neglected, in spite of admonitions to the contrary from France.[21]

The civil requirements of marriage were not neglected. As a result of the insalubrious climate and the inadequacies of medical practice in Louisiana, a large proportion of marriages involved either widows or widowers, many with children or debts.[22] A fairly typical marriage, involving members of the colonial gentry, was celebrated between Jacques Sernans Voisin and Françoise Denis de Bonaventure on June 7, 1745. The bride was a widow. The formal contract was witnessed by the governor and six other members of the Superior Council and was drawn up by the notary, Henry. Attached to the contract was a statement of the property settlement from the bride's previous marriage, amounting to 14,690 *livres*, quite a substantial sum.[23] The poor also registered their marriages. On June 9, 1745, François Gervais married Marie Anne Busson, with the contract drawn up by the notary, Henry. These were people of modest circumstances, for the contract gave only the parents' names, with no residence mentioned, and no enumeration of property.[24]

In dealing with marriage, the work of the Superior Council sometimes wandered into strange areas. On July 17, 1744, the conduct of one Hardy, variously called Joseph, Pierre, Jean, and La Vierge, came under the scrutiny of Councillor Jean-Baptiste Raguet. Hardy, according to his neighbors, customarily and brutally mistreated his wife, Sylvie. She petitioned the Superior Council for a separation. Raguet investigated, and the council solemnly decided that the two should continue to live together for six more months and that Hardy should stop beating his wife.[25] The whole affair was complicated by a property suit against Hardy by his wife's son by a previous marriage. Did Sylvie take her son's side against her husband, thus creating discord? Or did Hardy, being of violent temperament anyway, simply use the suit as an excuse for beating his wife? Alas, the Hardys were little people, and the records did not elaborate their difficulties.

No aspect of the registry functions of the Superior Council consumed more time, or bred more civil suits, than wills, trusteeships, heirs, and assigns. The *Coutumes de Paris* were quite specific about the formalities

necessary for the registering of wills and the inheritance of property, particularly in cases with minor heirs. This exactness, so beneficial in France with its numberless judicial and notarial officials, was an obstacle to the rapid and uncontested probating of wills in Louisiana, where frontier conditions prevailed. The members of the Superior Council tried to make the best of an uncertain situation. They registered wills, gave advice in drawing them up, and supervised the formalities of transfer of property as best they could.

In the Old Regime, under both the Roman and the common law, the family was recognized as a judicial unit. The father, of course, had rights and powers denied the rest, but all had prerogatives that could not be ignored. The survivors had a joint right to participate in the inheritance and shared the loss when there were debts to be paid. According to the *Coutumes de Paris*, the family also elected an executor, or trustee, of the estate, when the heirs were minor and a qualified one was not named in the will. The trustee acted with full procuration and, in Louisiana, under the close supervision of the Superior Council. The family council, acting with the trustee, could allot shares of the estate and designate any dowered property that would go to the widow in case of remarriage, which was quite common in Louisiana. Even when duly notarized and registered, colonial inheritances were complex matters, giving rise to much disagreement, litigation, and petition, in spite of the expertise the councillors acquired in working on so many cases.

An extraordinary case, illustrative of much of the probate work of the Superior Council, occurred with the death of Jacques Roquigny, overseer of the king's plantation. Roquigny left only a verbal will, which was worthless, and the attorney-general quite properly ignored it. But Roquigny also left a substantial estate. He was survived by a widow and four minor children. There were accounts to be rendered to the king, others for a plantation of his own at English Turn, and, in general, much unsettled business. François Fleuriau, the attorney-general, appointed Councillor Raguet to supervise the probate proceedings. A family council was called to elect a trustee for the estate. Meeting with Raguet and Fleuriau, the family nominated an old friend, one Jean-Baptiste Provenché, as the trustee. As Provenché was illiterate, the two councillors supervised him closely. On January 17, 1746, Provenché, Raguet, and Fleuriau made a complete inventory of the goods on the king's plantation, a list running to twenty pages.[26] Then the trustee turned to leasing Roquigny's own plantation, as its value would diminish if it were left vacant. On February 5, one Darby was found to take the land and equipment for three years at 1,500 *livres* a year. Provenché and Raguet also paid debts on the estate, including one of 950 *livres* to a tailor, Jean-Baptiste Cariton, who had petitioned the Superior Council for collection.[27] No phase of the settlement was beyond the purview of the Superior Council.

A more conventional case involved the accidental drowning of an indebted New Orleans merchant, Durantaye. His chests, effects, and a slave were at the house of a Sieur Tarascon and were promptly sealed by order of the Superior Council. Creditors appeared at once. Gaspard Pictet petitioned for payment of 3,298 *livres* owed for merchandise, an inventory of which was attached to the petition. One Duplanty made his claim for 122 *piastres* on a debt, and Louis Morisset, a New Orleans merchant, petitioned for 2,082 *piastres* owed for merchandise. This was followed by Etienne Layssard's claim for 1,709 *livres*. The Superior Council ordered the opening of Durantaye's effects in the presence of the creditors, who would be satisfied in their claims as far

as possible. On February 7, 1746, the inventory was made, and the chests were found to contain mostly cloth and silverware.[28] Presumably, a distribution to the creditors was made, though it seems unlikely that Durantaye's goods would have paid all his debts.

Some estates were extraordinarily complex, involving years of suits and petitions. The succession of Councillor Raymond Amyault d'Ausseville took over three years to settle, and involved collateral heirs in Louisiana, a widow in St. Malo, Brittany, numerous debts, and at least two appeals to the Privy Council in France. The Breton widow, Dame Julienne Harinthon, who had rights of community, appealed at once to the Privy Council. But the litigation became so fierce that she renounced her rights, rather than see the case through. Thus the creditors and collateral heirs in New Orleans were left a clear field.

When Raymond d'Ausseville died, his estate was put in the hands of the probate attorney, Nicolas Barbin. The suits and petitions began coming in. One was from the Capuchin superior, asking an assessment from the estate to pay the *curé* of Chapitoulas. Two more arose from unsettled estates from d'Ausseville's activities as probate attorney. The main suits came from Bernarde Amyault, d'Ausseville's sister, and Pierre Delisle Dupart. In December, 1744, four months after d'Ausseville's death, Bernarde Amyault commissioned Antoine Aufrère and Gérard Pery, two experienced litigants, to act for her before the Superior Council concerning the estate. The same month, Dupart petitioned the Superior Council to turn the estate over to him.[29] Thus the three-sided struggle among Barbin, Dupart, and Aufrère began.

Several times the case seemed near conclusion, only to be continued by the unwillingness of the loser to abide by the Superior Council's judgment and the inability or disinclination of the Superior Council to enforce its decision. On February 6, 1745, Aufrère, representing Bernarde Amyault, obtained the permission of the attorney-general, Fleuriau, to sell the effects of the estate, including the slaves. But Barbin did not comply with the intent of this order and turned the estate over to Aufrère in driblets. Most of the succession he simply kept. On February 12, July 12, and August 14, 1745, Aufrère complained to the Superior Council about Barbin's conduct.[30] Nor did Dupart have any better luck in getting physical possession of the estate. Dupart maintained that he had given Aufrère bond for «returns and funds of the d'Ausseville succession, on condition that sums recovered would be turned over to the said Dupart . . .» Aufrère was selling the pieces of the estate that he could pry out of Barbin, but he was not turning any funds over to Dupart. On August 9, 1745, Dupart obtained a judgment against Aufrère, who was ordered to make an accounting of his activities, while Barbin was forbidden to make any further remittances to Aufrère. The whole estate was to be put up for judicial sale before Councillor Raguet.[31]

Aufrère now began to act like Barbin. Having at least part of the estate, he simply delayed making his accounting or turning any funds over to anyone. Instead, he continued to press Barbin and on January 24, 1746, received a second judgment against the probate attorney. With this decision, Aufrère and Dupart became jointly responsible for the d'Ausseville estate. Barbin, annoyed at losing control of the succession, now hounded Dupart and Aufrère for an accounting of their trusteeship, and on April 8, 1747, won his point before the Superior Council. Aufrère promptly appealed to the Privy Council and left for France, with costs to be borne by the succession.[32]

The d'Ausseville succession illustrates well both the working and the limitations of Superior Council as a probate court. As in the Roquigny and Durantaye cases, the Superior Council came to a fairly rapid initial decision. But in this instance, the three principal litigants, Dupart, Barbin, and Aufrère, refused to abide by any decision of the Superior Council that did not give them the whole estate. As the costs of such litigation were borne by the succession, the three were engaged in what can only be called probate racketeering. But what about the heirs? The widow renounced her community. As for Bernarde, it does not appear that she received very much from her brother's estate. Probate proceedings took it all. In this instance, the Superior Council was unable to procure justice. The interests opposing a settlement were too strong. This is, perhaps, the most common and discouraging feature of Old Regime justice, the constant bending of the law to favor the well born and well connected.

II

For criminal justice the Superior Council sat as the supreme court of the colony. But it did little work in this capacity, for few criminal cases came before it, although ample evidence exists to demonstrate that Louisiana colonists were far from peaceful or orderly. However, Louisiana crime seems to have been a fairly safe occupation, with the criminal usually escaping apprehension, for the methods of investigation were very inefficient. Hence, it was rare for the culprit to be caught and dealt with by the law.

Instead, there were periodic complaints about crimes. Thefts were charged to runaway slaves, assaults to unknown enemies. Seldom was anyone prosecuted. One such complaint was brought to the Superior Council by Jean-Baptiste Raguet, a councillor himself. On February 21, 1745, a fire broke out in his house; in fact, in his very room. Raguet woke his son and some servants, who brought pails of water from the well and finally put out the fire. It could not have been very serious, for Raguet did not think it necessary to awaken his wife. Nonetheless he was much disturbed and deposed that «the flames came from the outside, from the roof of the pavilion . . . He cannot believe otherwise than that this fire was premeditated, and set purposely . . .»[33] He blamed runaway slaves and wanted an investigation to find the arsonists. Perhaps the investigation took place, but there are no further details in the records.

An equally spectacular case occurred two years later, in March, 1747. Sebastien François Ange Le Normant, *commissaire-ordonnateur* of the colony, and second in rank only to the governor, was assaulted as he went home from the governor's house. As he left about nine in the evening, accompanied by a man servant, Le Normant was approached by a man dressed in red, with a cape and a large hat. The stranger drew his sword and attacked the startled councillor. Le Normant defended himself, retreating constantly toward the governor's house. Sending his servant to raise the alarm, Le Normant then slipped and fell into a drainage ditch. At this moment relief arrived and saved the councillor. His unknown assailant fled into the night. Though safe in limb, Le Normant was wounded in pride at the indignity put upon his august person. The next day he wrote up a statement for the Superior Council in which he implied that one Taillefer, a cadet officer, was his assailant.[34] But, as with the arsonist of Raguet's house, the criminal was never apprehended.

Crimes by soldiers, if committed against civilians, were treated rather lightly and required some measure of proof for conviction. But the slightest breach of military discipline

brought quick and brutal punishment. Never was military punishment swifter, or given with less cause, than in the Bad Bread Mutiny of 1745. On Sunday, July 11, 1745, a soldier named Braude, of de Gauvrit's company in the New Orleans garrison, refused to eat the mess bread, saying that it was not fit for dogs. He was then led off to jail by Lieutenant Favrot. The town major, Etienne de Bénac, immediately petitioned for a trial, on the grounds that the example set by Braude was prejudicial to the discipline of the garrison. Governor Vaudreuil agreed, and two days later a court heard the testimony. Five witnesses were called against Braude – two sergeants, two private soldiers, and Lieutenant Favrot – who all confirmed that Braude had refused the bread. Interrogation of the prisoner confirmed these facts. On July 14, only three days after the incident, sentence of death was passed on Braude. The others who refused the bread were let off, and the «mutiny» was over.[35] Military justice was swift and harsh.

If a crime were unpremeditated, the criminal might well be caught and tried. One evening in May, 1747, a free Negro sailor, Etienne La Rue, was accosted by three convalescent soldiers. They insulted him; he returned the insult. A brawl began, the corporal of the guard was called, and, after a small scuffle, poor La Rue found himself being led away to jail. The intoxicated sailor then drew and fired a pistol, wounding the corporal. This only resulted in a second and more severe beating, and the unfortunate La Rue was loaded with chains and jailed. He was charged with attempted murder and carrying a concealed weapon.

The forces of law then began to operate. The basic statute for Louisiana was the great criminal ordinance of 1670, which set the standard for French procedure until the Revolution.[36] The ordinance specified that criminal procedure should take the form of a series of interrogations – of the accused, of the witnesses, of anyone even remotely connected with the case. From their answers came a series of sworn depositions, which were supposed to record all the known facts of the case. The attorney-general would then make his recommendations to the court, based on the testimony. There was no habeas corpus or any protection for the accused against self-incrimination. The procedure was heavily Roman in origin, resembling an inquest, and was far removed from the trial system known in the English common law.[37]

The Superior Council followed this detailed and complex procedure very closely. Raguet, the examining magistrate, first interrogated the three soldiers and then Baptiste Roussy, the corporal of the guard who had arrested La Rue. All agreed substantially on the facts, with Roussy adding, in a second hearing, that he thought that La Rue's firing of the pistol had been an accident. Raguet questioned La Rue and brought the soldiers and the corporal to face him. When Raguet finished, the attorney-general, Fleuriau, recommended that the Superior Council fine La Rue. It did, to the amount of 110 *livres*, and also confiscated his pistols.[38] The whole business was conducted with commendable speed, taking only from May 5 to May 19, 1747.

La Rue seems to have received a fair hearing and a light punishment. All the forms of law were observed. Yet, except for a remark by Baptiste Roussy that La Rue fired in accident, the sailor probably would have been executed. The basic thrust of French criminal justice, in Louisiana as well as at home, was to condemn the accused, who was automatically considered guilty. Why else would one be arrested? As nearly all those accused of crime were poor, criminal justice also was seen as a measure to keep the rabble in hand and to

maintain at least a semblance of public order. Attempting to determine the truth about a crime was decidedly a poor third in the minds of Old Regime authorities. Regardless of the formality of the procedure, the criminal investigation actually rested on two premises. one, the man was guilty of the stated crime and ought to be punished severely; or, two, he was the type of person obviously guilty of some crime and ought to be punished severely. The results of such an attitude meant that most people accused as criminals were barbarously dealt with. Yet, because of poor police methods, most crimes went unpunished. La Rue, therefore, was fortunate to escape with his life, a comment on the conscientious investigation by Raguet, who examined the case with an eye to the truth. Had this occurred in a French port city, La Rue could hardly have escaped hanging.

III

The largest single group of judicial decisions of the Superior Council consisted of civil cases involving disputes over property. Some of these arose from estates, as in the d'Ausseville succession. Others resulted from confusion over the rights of heirs after a parent's remarriage. Many were simple demands for payment of a debt. Most were conflicts over business agreements. The common element in civil cases in colonial Louisiana concerned the rights and obligations of a contract. The *Coutumes de Paris* went far beyond the basic Roman axiom that good faith was the essential element in a contract. Specific injunctions covered such situations as the rights of minors, the marriage community, and the obligations of a business agreement. The complexities of the law, combined with those of a frontier colony, could hardly fail to result in numerous court cases.

Other reasons may be cited for the extraordinary number of civil cases in Louisiana, a poor colony that probably never had more than 5,000 free persons at any one time during the French domination. The colony had no stable medium of exchange, debts being figured in French, Spanish, and local money, the last being paper. This sometimes caused misunderstandings. There was also the problem of slavery. Slaves were legal chattels, to be bought, sold, or leased. Transactions involving the labor and condition of slaves were an uncertain business, and frequently led to litigation. Finally, the general economic level of the colony was so close to total insolvency that there were many small foreclosures, each involving a suit.

The legal adventures experienced in colonial Louisiana were often quite extraordinary. Consider the rather gaudy record of one Sieur Bancio Piémont. In the first six months of 1746 he appeared before the Superior Council twelve times, registering powers of attorney, instituting lawsuits against his friends and neighbors, registering bills of sale, and the like.[39] He was an effective litigant, both for himself and those for whom he held procuration. On April 6, 1746, he won all three of his cases that came to judgment.[40] One was quite considerable, involving 2,400 *livres*, while a second case dealt with six white beaver hats.

Slavery provided innumerable pretexts for civil cases. The health of slaves was often poor, thus reducing the value of their labor. Louis Tixerant found himself faced with this problem in January, 1746, having leased a slave who could not work. The slave had formerly been leased by Monsieur de Noyon, where he had remained in bed, having a gout and sciatica of the hip. Examined by Dr. Du Prat and pronounced cured, the slave had now had a relapse of the sciatica and could not stand up. Tixerant wanted the lease contract annulled, but he lost his case. Monsieur Cha-

milly, from whom he leased the slave, had told him of the disability, but Tixerant had preferred to take the word of Dr. Du Prat.[41] Considering the state of medical practice in colonial New Orleans, it was hardly a competent opinion.

Some of the civil cases before the Superior Council showed the havoc wrought by the constant fluctuation in the value of money. On February 26, 1746, Louis Robineau de Portneuf appeared before the Superior Council. He had become trustee of the estate of the minor orphan, Gabriel de Juzan, his wife's nephew. Now he wanted to be rid of the responsibility, and a family meeting elected Jean Trudeau, his wife's brother, as the new trustee. The notary, Henry, drew up the necessary documents, and the Superior Council duly filed them. But this was only the beginning for poor Robineau de Portneuf. He had been entrusted with 3,600 *livres* in colonial paper from the Juzan succession in 1743, but the royal declaration of January, 1745, had reduced the currency three-fifths in value, and he wished the succession to bear this loss. Portneuf's affairs were further complicated by a petition of Catherine Magny, who sued him for debts owed her by his wife's first husband. On March 5 the Superior Council unraveled the complex legal tangle enmeshing Portneuf and his wife. The unhappy marine officer had to pay both the face value of the colonial notes to Jean Trudeau for the Juzan succession, and his wife's first husband's debts to Catherine Magny.[42] The settlement was expensive, but it had one virtue uncommon in Old Regime civil cases – it was final.

Decisions involving international trade were made by the Superior Council with the same finality as those concerning only the colony. On January 29, 1746, Paul Rasteau informed the Superior Council that he had bought ten ingots of gold from Dayon and Forstall, Louisiana merchants who traded with Havana. They had had the ingots valued at seventeen carats in Havana, while the assay in Louisiana weighed them at only ten carats. Understandably somewhat upset, Rasteau promised the *commissaire-ordonnateur*, Le Normant, that he would return the ingots, provided he were reimbursed. Thus, it would be possible to «avoid all discussions . . .» and lawsuits. Otherwise, he would have to send the gold to France as weighing ten carats. This drew an immediate response from Dayon and Forstall, who asked Rasteau to accept the Havana evaluation of the gold, or return it with no compensation for his expenses or trouble. Rasteau complained that he was being bilked out of the profits of a legitimate business transaction. In their judgment, the members of the Superior Council chose to ignore all the facts, whatever they were, and to void the whole transaction. Rasteau was ordered to return the gold, and the plaintiffs to pay 5 per cent fee to recompense Rasteau for any lost profits.[43] The complexities of a case involving international trade simply precluded any other judgment.

As with notarial and registry functions and criminal law, the civil suits brought befor the Superior Council received the close and serious attention of the judges. French procedure and the strictures of the Paris customary law were followed as closely as possible. Formal pleas in equity, unrecognized in the *Pays du Droit Coutume*, were not admitted by the Superior Council. Contracts were maintained or overturned according to a specific statute or custom, rather than by appeals to an abstract natural law. Thus Tixerant, who had leased a bad slave and needed relief from his contract, could not find it at law, for the *Coutumes de Paris* supported his adversary. Robineau de Portneuf's petition met a similar fate, for the *Coutumes de Paris* maintained inviolate a duly notarized contract.

Only in Rasteau's case, which was obviously beyond the competence of the Superior Council, did the court depart from the customary law as its standard of judgment. In Louisiana, as in France, the law was a solemn, even sacred, corpus, and it was the duty of the judges to uphold and enforce it meticulously, rather than to interpret or enlarge it.

IV

In reviewing the judgments of the Superior Council, one can draw several conclusions. In the first place, justice before the Superior Council was rapid. Tixerant's claim that a defective slave was leased to him was disposed of in two days. The affair of Rasteau's gold took seven. Portneuf lost his two cases in four days. Only when tremendous influence was brought to bear on the councillors, as with the d'Ausseville succession, did a case drag on for years. The law's delay, a nightmare in France, was cut to the minimum in Louisiana. The Superior Council also judged with finality. Although theoretically possible, appeal to France was actually out of the question. It never brought results. Interminable appeal, through a multiplicity of courts, a marked feature of French justice, did not exist in the colony. Moreover, although justice in Louisiana was bent to serve the rich and powerful, there was less of this in the colony than in France. The reason, I suspect, was less the probity of the judges than the fact that there were few nobles in Louisiana, and almost no rich. Nonetheless, real justice, or at least fair application of the law, was much easier for a peasant or an artisan to obtain in Louisiana than in France. This is not altogether surprising; local justice in the Old Regime was frequently better than royal judicial decisions. But one cannot escape the conclusion that the quality of both civil and criminal justice was better in Louisiana than in France.

Notes

1. «Letters Patent of the King Establishing a Superior Council in Louisiana» (Versailles, December 18, 1712), published by Henry Plauché Dart, «The Legal Institutions of Louisiana,» *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* (hereafter *LHQ*), II (January, 1919), 76-78.

2. This official in Louisiana was variously called the *commissaire-ordonnateur, commissaire royale, premier conseilleur,* or *intendant*. The office was commissioned, not venal, and the duties covered police, finance, and the administration of the general civil affairs of the colony. The position was roughly analogous to the *intendant de province* in France, although I will follow the contemporary custom and use the title commissioner to describe this official in Louisiana. See, e.g., Thomas Chapais, *The Great Intendant* (Toronto, 1921), a study of Jean Talon in Canada; or F. Dumas, *La Généralité du Tours au XVIII^e siècle: Administration de l'intendant du Cluzel,* vol. XXXIX of *Mémoires de la Société Archéologique de Touraine* (Tours, 1894). Both books give an excellent and lucid account of the intendant's position and functions.

3. *Procureur-general*, the public prosecutor and legal officer. For a description of the duties of this class of officials, see Marcel Marion, *Dictionnaire des institutions de la France aux XVII et XVIII siècles* (Paris, 1923), p. 460.

4. The strongest political personality in the colony, usually the governor, exercised the right to recommend men for appointment to the Superior Council. While the Council of Commerce had a legal veto power over appointments to the Superior Council, this authority was a shadow, for the men in France really had no choice but to follow the governor's recommendation. With regard to the councillors themselves, we may say that they were rich by Louisiana standards and were friends of the local administration.

5. Henry Plauché Dart, «Politics in Louisiana in 1724,» *LHQ*, V (July, 1922), 298-315.

6. During this period, the commissioner usually represented the commercial interests of the company, as well as attended to his duties of police, finance, and general civil administration. In the early years the colony was small enough to make this arrangement practicable, and it saved the commercial companies an extra salary.

7. H. P. Dart, «Legal Institutions,» pp. 82-83.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 86-90.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

10. W. K. Dart, «Ordinance of 1717 Governing Notaries in Louisiana During the French Colonial Period,» *LHQ*, X (January, 1927), 82-85. This ordinance dealt with the conduct of notaries in Louisiana, attempting to regulate them along the lines established in France. Because of the general requirement in all French law during the Old Regime that property transfers, procurations, marriages, and wills be notarized, these minor judicial officials were an extraordinarily important part of French life. On the functions and duties of notaries see Marion, *op. cit.*, pp. 400-401.

11. See, for example, *Collection of Regulations, Edicts and Decrees Concerning the Commerce, Administration and Justice and the Policing of the French Colonies in America* (Paris, 1765; WPA trans. by O. Blanchard, Baton Rouge, 1940).

12. Charles Edwards O'Neill, *Church and State in French Colonial Louisiana: Policy and Politics*

to 1732 (New Haven, Conn., 1966), chaps. 2, 3, 10; «Déclaration du Roy qui règle la manière d'élire des tuteurs et des curateurs aux enfans dont les pères possedoient des biens tant dans le Royaume que dan le colonies . . .» (Paris, December 15, 1721), Bibliothèque Nationale (hereafter BN), F 23622 (548).

13. H. H. Cruzat, ed., «Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana,» XLIV-XLVI (January-December, 1744), *LHQ*, XII (December, 1929) to XIII (April, 1930). This calendar of the Superior Council records, edited by H. H. Cruzat and G. Lugano, was a continuing project of the *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, portions appearing in virtually every issue from 1917 through January, 1943. In addition to the Cruzat calendar, there are the «black books» in the Louisiana State Museum in the Pontalba Building. These are an index to the full Superior Council records, bound in black looseleaf notebooks, hence the name. Somewhat more complete than the Cruzat calendar, the black books are marred by a good deal of misdating and misfiling of entries, as well as by some questionable translation. Both of these calendars are abstracts of the Superior Council Records, found in the Louisiana State Museum Archives and in the Presbytère, and have been microfilmed by Tulane University. The original documents are closed to the scholar, who must use the Tulane microfilm if he wishes to pursue his inquiry beyond the Cruzat calendar or the black books. The citations in this paper are from the Tulane University microfilm. The original records of the Superior Council are very badly water-stained, and heavily patched with transparent tape. Many of the entries are now illegible. The Cruzat calendar and the black books are of extraordinary importance, and the scholar is well advised to consult them before venturing to the original documents themselves. Regardless of their condition, however, the Superior Council records are invaluable social documents, giving the «feel» and the temper of French colonial life as no other records or memoirs can.

14. «Records of the Superior Council,» LIII (January-February, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (January, 1932), 120; Tulane University microfilm, reel 46, ms. 97. Coverage for the period November, 1745, to April, 1746, is very skimpy, and the documents are in very bad shape. Much that was calendared by Cruzat is not on the microfilm roll.

15. *Ibid.*, XLV (March-September, 1744), *LHQ*, XIII (January, 1940), 130; Tulane University microfilm, reel 45, ms. 96, for the period March, May-June, 1744.

16. *Ibid.*, XLV (March-September, 1744), *LHQ*, XIII (January, 1930), 148; Professor John Clark, of the University of Kansas, is working on an economic history of colonial New Orleans. He has collected a great deal of information on the Rasteau, and will unquestionably clear up many of the questions concerning their activities.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 149-151. The microfilm at Tulane does not cover the month of August, 1744.

18. See Henry Plauché Dart, «Marriage Contracts of French Colonial Louisiana,» *LHQ*, XVII (April, 1934), 229-241. James D. Hardy, Jr., «Law in Colonial Louisiana,» *Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Institute* (Baton Rouge, 1966).

19. See, as an example, Robert Forster, *The Nobility of Toulouse in the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, 1960).

20. «Déclaration du Roy concernant la religion . . .» (Paris, May 14, 1724), BN, 1 F 23623 (83): the edict has been published in Isambert *et. al.*, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises* (Paris, 1830), XXI, 261-270. Article 15 refers to marriages. See also Shelby McCloy, *The Humanitarian Movement in Eighteenth Century France*

(Lexington, Ky., 1957), chap. 1.

21. O'Neill, *op. cit.*, particularly chap. 10.

22. See, e.g., the year 1745, in which there were twenty-five marriages recorded for Louisiana by the Superior Council. Of these, eleven (44 per cent) involved widows or widowers.

23. «Records of the Superior Council,» L (June-July, 1745), *LHQ*, XIV (April, 1931), 251; Tulane University microfilm, reel 46, ms. 97.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Ibid.*, XLV (March-September, 1744), *LHQ*, XII (January, 1929), pp. 138, 141, 145, XIII (January, 1930), 142-145; Tulane University microfilm, reel 45 (March, 1744), ms. 96.

26. *Ibid.*, LIII (January-February, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (January, 1932), 122; Tulane University microfilm, reel 46, ms. 97.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130, 138, 142; see also *ibid.*, XLVII (January-February, 1745), *LHQ*, XIII (July, 1930), 509-510. This document was obviously misfiled under 1745, whereas it belonged in 1746. It is a petition by the creditors to sell Durantaye's goods.

29. *Ibid.*, XLVI (October-December, 1744), *LHQ*, XIII (April, 1930), 316-318, 320; LI (August, 1745), *LHQ*, XIV (July, 1931), 459; and LII (September-December, 1745), *LHQ*, XIV (October, 1931), 582. The conflict among Barbin, Dupart, and Aufrère, representing Bernarde Amyault, was complicated by two factors: first, Aufrère's daughter was suing her husband, Gérard Pery, for nonsupport, and second, Aufrère was for a time representing both Bernarde Amyault and Dupart. For an extended treatment of this case, see J. D. Hardy, Jr., «Probate Racketeering in Colonial Louisiana,» *Louisiana History*, IX (Spring, 1968), 109-121.

30. *Ibid.*, XLVI (January-February, 1745), *LHQ*, XIII (July, 1930), 513-515; and XLVII (February, 1745), *LHQ*, XIII (October, 1930), 622, 667, 670-671.

31. *Ibid.*, L (June-July, 1745), *LHQ*, XIV (April, 1931), 267-268; and LI (August, 1745), *LHQ*, XIV (July, 1931), 451, 453, 455-456; Tulane University microfilm, reel 46, ms. 97.

32. *Ibid.*, LI (August, 1745), *LHQ*, XIV (July, 1931), 460-461; LIII (January-February, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (January, 1932), 127-128; LIV (March-April, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (July, 1932), 513-514, 523, 526; LIX (September-December, 1746), *LHQ*, XVII (January, 1934), 200; and LXI (March, 1747), *LHQ*, XVII (July, 1934), 562-563; Tulane University microfilm, reel 46, ms. 97.

33. *Ibid.*, XLVIII (February, 1745), *LHQ*, XIII (October, 1930), 679-680.

34. Henry Plauché Dart, «A Duel in the Dark in New Orleans on March 14, 1747,» *LHQ*, XIII (April, 1930), 199-204. The article includes a translation of the deposition made to the Superior Council by Le Normant, translated by H. H. Cruzat.

35. «Records of the Superior Council,» L (June-July, 1745), *LHQ*, XIV (April, 1931), 263-267.

36. «Ordonnance du Roy pour les matières criminelles . . .» (Paris, August, 1670), BN, F 40806.

37. Henry Plauché Dart, «A Criminal Trial Before the Superior Council of Louisiana,» *LHQ*, XIII (July, 1930), 367-376.

38. H. H. Cruzat, ed., «Documents Covering the

Trial o' Etienne La Rue,» *LHQ*, XIII (July, 1930), 377-390.

39. «Records of the Superior Council,» LIII (January-February, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (January, 1932), 144-145; LIV (March-April, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (July, 1932), 517-519, 525, 527; and LV (May, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (October, 1932), 665.

40. *Ibid.*, LIV (March-April, 1746), *LHQ*, VI (July, 1932), 527.

41. *Ibid.*, LIII (January-February, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (January, 1932), 136-137, 139; Tulane University microfilm, reel 46, ms. 97.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 153; and LIV (March-April, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (July, 1932), 508-509, 512, 514.

43. *Ibid.*, LIII (January-February, 1746), *LHQ*, XV (January, 1932), 130-133, 139; Tulane University microfilm, reel 46, ms. 97.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIES IN LOUISIANA DURING THE FRENCH REGIME 1673–1763[1]

By Nancy M. Miller Surrey

In discussing the industrial development of the Mississippi Valley during the French regime, I shall deal only with agriculture,–first, because time will not permit a discussion of other French activities, and secondly, because the Mississippi Valley is primarily agricultural.

The French people are practical; moreover, they were never enthusiastic colonizers; hence it was necessary to convince them that there were greater possibilities for them in Louisiana than in either Canada or France. This task fell to the missionaries, and the explorers, alert prospectors. Father Marquette begins the work with remarks on the excellence of the soil of the Mississippi Valley, on the quantities of native fruits and vegetables, and on the ease with which wineries could be established. In 1676, Allouez reiterates all this, giving more details. Membré tells them: the soil is capable of providing all that can be desired for maintenance, even for a great colony; the climate is such that two crops can be grown annually; great herds of cattle, bearing a fine wool, scarcely inferior in quality to that grown upon the backs of sheep in France, graze upon vast prairies ready for the plow; hemp grows wild,–in quality superior to that produced in Canada, in quantity sufficient for all needed cordage; tar certainly can be made very near the sea; and finally, he has not had time to look for mines, but has found coal in several places; and the Indians have both lead and copper.

Douay, 1684-1688, who knew the Valley better than any of the others quoted, is still more sweeping in his statements: Louisiana is the finest and most fertile country in the world; there are native foods in abundance for settlers; from the very time of arrival, a large family would have plenteous provisions, and in two years would be more at ease than anywhere in Europe; horses are to be had in plenty for every use, and so cheap that an Indian feels well paid when he receives an axe in exchange for a horse; Douay is sure sugar-cane can be grown, and can easily be introduced from the West Indies. He mentions the possibility of the grazing of sheep upon the prairies, and the development of a pearl industry on the gulf coast. The presence of mulberry trees in all the forests leads him to suggest the possibility of a silk industry.

Up to the very time of actual French settlement in both upper and lower Louisiana, such accounts frequently found their way to Canada and France. Argoud's relation (1697) restates all Douay said some ten years earlier, and adds these economic possibilities: a great lumber industry, ship timbers as fine as any in Norway, cedar and other colored woods for inlaid work (a commodity much needed in France) as beautiful as those found

in Brazil, and the growing of both cotton and tobacco.

The period of purely economic prospecting ended about 1700. It would be difficult to overstress the importance of this work or the facts that these men had had previous experience in Canada, and had spent most of their stay in the Valley, in the generously fertile, healthful Illinois country, about which the churchmen could, with reasonable honesty, send those glowing «booster» accounts to Canada and France, making at least a few Frenchmen desirous to migrate to that earthly paradise.

Had the Mississippi been discovered by way of the gulf rather than the St. Lawrence, the writer is certain there would have been no French industries in Louisiana. The story of French colonization in warm climates, made with colonists drawn mainly from France herself, shows colonies that were early abandoned or had long drawn out infancies. Louisiana certainly would have had the former fate, but for the Canadian prospectors, and the Illinois country.

If the discovery had been made at the mouth of the river, the prospectors' accounts would have read like this: there are no good harbors; the whole coast is low, sandy, and sterile; the mouth of the Mississippi is clogged with deltas that make it hard for sea-going vessels to enter, and throughout its course, navigation on this river is most difficult; between the coast and «beautiful prairies ready for the plow» are miles of lagoons and coastal swamps, beyond which are lands covered by a semi-tropical jungle that must be cleared and drained before they are ready even for a hoe; the climate is hot, and unhealthful in summer, making it impossible for men to work longer than two hours morning and evening in clearing and breaking ground; there are millions of mosquitoes that torture us day and night; pelts are very apt to decay before they can be shipped to France. Would such accounts have led Canadians, much less Frenchmen, to desire to migrate to Louisiana?

The two French attempts at settlement on the gulf coast were very similar both as to the make-up of the expeditions, and the choice of the site for settlement. La Salle failed. Iberville succeeded because the Biloxi settlement received Canadian reinforcements the first year, and because Bienville was able to force each man to prepare, to plant, and to tend a plot of ground, thereby saving the colonists from starvation. Gardens begun under pressure in 1704, but continued voluntarily, were, in 1713, producing a surplus which was sold to the Spanish garrison at Pensacola. This trade continued to the end of the French regime, and down to 1717 was practically the only industry at Mobile, where it furnished the settlers with a little money with which to buy European supplies.

Market-gardening developed somewhat differently at New Orleans. The Company of the west instructed settlers to plant gardens. After a year or two, the suggestion was disregarded by some, and by 1723, there were many who were procuring such supplies from the so-called «German coast,» some thirty miles above New Orleans. The palisaded gardens and the truck-patches of these Germans provided cucumbers, salads, green peas and beans, artichokes, sweet-potato-greens, spinach, onions, pumpkins, dried peas and beans, French, Spanish, and English melons, sweet and white potatoes, and the watermelon, «the finest monument of the garden.»

The products from these gardens in 1731, besides the green vegetables, were three thousand barrels of potatoes, and one thousand of dried beans. On this coast in 1744,

there were one hundred whites and two hundred blacks engaged in market-gardening, animal industry, and the making of butter and cheese. From 1750 to the end of French control, the gardens were considered as belonging to the capital. Pointe Coupée, and other areas more distant, sent to New Orleans such supplies as dried peas and beans, pumpkins, and potatoes. Before the end of French control, shipments of both dried peas and beans were made to the islands.

Notwithstanding that fruits and berries grew wild in Louisiana in great abundance, the French did much of the pioneer work in horticulture for the Valley. They introduced the orange and lemon from Santo Domingo, the fig and pineapple from Provence, and the peach and two varieties of plums from Carolina. For these fruits, they tested out the habitat and the methods of culture adapted to the new environment. Some consideration was given the olive, but the French did very little with this culture. Bienville, in all probability, was the first orange-grower in the Mississippi Valley; he had, in 1710, a fine grove on his plantation near the Mobile. By 1728, there were other beautiful orchards around Mobile and New Orleans. The French planted orange groves at no considerable distance north of New Orleans, and even there the trees were twice damaged by frost—in 1735 and 1748.

By 1728, the pineapple was cultivated quite extensively around New Orleans, and peach orchards were to be found in all the French settlements of the Valley. Pears, plums, cherries, and apples were tried out in all localities. As far north as Natchez, the French found that such trees produced better wood than fruit. Even at Natchez, the fruit of the apple and pear was not so good as that grown in the Illinois country, where there were large apple orchards, usually containing a few pear trees. The French cultivated grapes in all the settlements, but did nothing with the growing of berries.

The French brought wheat to Louisiana, and in that virgin, untried soil, made test after test to find its proper habitat, finally demonstrating for all time that the Valley's best wheat areas lie north of the Ohio, and that, there, the fall sowings give the better results. The story of wheat growing in lower Louisiana begins with the patch Bienville planted at the Mississippi post in 1700. Flood, however, swept it away before it matured. Four years later, Bienville again planted wheat, this time on his plantation near the Mobile, where he persistently sowed it year after year for ten years in the face of every kind of discouragement. As early as 1707, less courageous men had despaired; by 1711, few farmers were sanguine enough to assert that wheat could be successfully grown on the gulf coast, yet, as has been stated, the indefatigable Bienville went on planting wheat. Occasionally his patch escaped fogs during the maturing period and gave him a fair yield.

For the industrial development of Louisiana, the Company of the west placed the emphasis upon agriculture, especially upon wheat growing. Following the Company's instructions, practically every farmer along the Mississippi and Red rivers in 1718 was growing a little wheat, and some good harvests were reported even below New Orleans. At Natchitoches, they planted both a French and a Spanish red variety, the latter succeeding better. As late as 1735, this enthusiasm for wheat growing was but little abated, and not during the French period did the farmers cease to attempt to grow wheat in lower Louisiana. Rust was the growers' greatest obstacle; they tried many things in order to prevent it, but found nothing that could be relied upon.

In the Illinois country, the French began

the growing of wheat in 1687. This area, by 1721, was producing a surplus which, as flour, was shipped to New Orleans. Both wind- and horse-power flour mills were established, and in 1744, these mills had a surplus of over 800,000 pounds of flour. Two years later, the Wabash settlements began to export wheat, and by 1750, the region above the Ohio was producing three times as much wheat, or wheat products, as was consumed there. Wheat culture in upper Louisiana increased rapidly during the last ten years of French control; many shipments of wheat products for war supplies were made to the upper Ohio garrisons, to Detroit, and to New Orleans during the French and Indian War.

The French did practically none of the pioneer work for the growing of corn in the Mississippi Valley; this work had been done by the Indians before their arrival. Indian fashion, the French, in lower Louisiana, selected the land for a corn field, then girdled the trees, burned off the canes, and the following day planted the corn. On such a field a single stalk would usually yield five or six ears, and a negro could produce about three barrels of shelled corn per acre. In the Illinois country, the yield was a thousand fold. Besides the Indian variety, the French cultivated several other kinds of corn, such as white, red, blue, yellow, wrinkled, flat, and also a species that enabled them to grow two crops annually on the same ground. By 1738, this excess was three times the amount consumed.

For the rice culture, the French did all the pioneer work. They brought rice from Carolina, where it had been introduced from Madagascar in 1684; they tested for the mean temperature required, the length of season, and the kinds of soil best suited to it. In making the soil test, they planted it on wet bottom lands where they grew it without irrigation, upon higher ground with irrigation, and on uplands where they planted it in winter and grew it without irrigation. Each soil produced rice, but the best quality and yield came from the irrigated fields. By 1719, most lower Louisiana farmers were growing rice crops, and ten years later, the same condition prevailed. The census of New Orleans for 1731 gives that year's rice crop as 53,000 barrels, 50,600 of which came from one plantation. The rice surplus, like that of corn, was disposed of in the French American islands.

Rice culture was profitable only when in conjunction with other crops; otherwise there was too much idleness for slaves. The small farmer, with a slave or two, usually coupled it with cotton, wheat, and tobacco, while the planter linked it with tobacco, indigo, and lumbering. Possibly as early as 1713, certainly in 1720, the French were growing in Louisiana a variety of cotton known as «white Siam.» It was very white, but not so fine as the so-called «upland cotton.» The French tried out cotton in all their settlements: the Illinois country was too cold; Vincennes, at thirty-nine degrees latitude, could grow cotton that would not mature in Carolina above thirty-six degrees. Ginning was a great handicap to the cotton growers. The French had several gins, but none with sufficient speed and perfection to stimulate cotton growing greatly.

A belief that the soil and climate of Louisiana was similar to that of Virginia led France to hope that her new colony would soon relieve her of her heavy English tobacco bill by producing what tobacco she needed. In 1713, a slump in the price of Virginia tobacco relieved the French purse, and simultaneously lessened her interest in Louisiana tobacco growing. This attitude of the French government had its effect upon the Louisiana farmers by causing them to slacken somewhat their activity in this industry. In a manner similar

to that carried out for wheat and rice, soil and climatic conditions were tested for tobacco. The soil at Natchitoches, it was found, contained too much saltpeter to produce a good quality; the Illinois country had too short a season to insure maturing a crop; when the length of season permitted, an exceptionally fine quality of tobacco was produced at the Wabash settlements; Natchez grew good tobacco and gave a fine yield, but Pointe Coupée was the French tobacco field *par excellence* both as to quality and quantity. By way of pointing out the accuracy of the French work, it may be noted that the Pointe Coupée area still has some fame as to the quality of its tobacco, its yield is around 400 pounds per acre, and the old French method of preparing the tobacco for market is to some extent still in use.

Tobacco culture in Louisiana had some ups, but many downs. There were numerous natural pests to be overcome, freight troubles to be solved, and often there were seasons wholly unfavorable. Perhaps the heaviest blow received was in 1731, when the King became the sole buyer of Louisiana tobacco. Prices fell gradually for several years. This condition dampened the ardor of all growers for the culture and some of them gave up the industry. Others, however, kept on, and in 1735, Pointe Coupée shipped 100,000 pounds; in 1763, in spite of war conditions, Louisiana put on the market 180,000 pounds.

Notwithstanding the fact that none of the prospectors found indigo in Louisiana, it nevertheless grew there, and very soon the discovery of indigo meant to the French agriculturalists land with high productivity. The French made some experiments with the cultivation of wild indigo, alone, and also side by side with a variety that France had introduced earlier into her American islands from Hindostan. The foreign variety proved to be the better, and by 1720 was being grown on a number of Louisiana plantations.

Having determined upon the best variety of indigo, the French next took up the number of crops advisable to harvest annually from the same field. One, or at most two, in Louisiana equalled in quantity three in Santo Domingo and excelled the island indigo in quality, being more copper colored and of a brighter hue. One slave, on fertile land, could grow from 50 to 70 pounds of indigo per acre.

By 1725, most Louisiana planters were growing indigo of the best quality, and in 1744, there were ten each of whom was producing annually 15,000 pounds. The growers struck their first real snag in 1747 when Carolina began to export indigo and England placed a bounty of six pence per pound on the Carolina product, which bounty enabled the English planters to double their equipment in three years. Just at this time, a Spanish trade sprang up in Louisiana, because of the war. This trade dealt a staggering blow to all branches of agriculture by causing planters and farmers to neglect agriculture for trade. When the Spanish commerce suddenly ended in 1752, Louisiana was on the verge of ruin. Indigo growers weathered this economic storm and in 1762 put on the market 82,000 pounds of indigo, but succumbed when the colony was transferred to Spain, because this shut off their French market. The industry dragged on until 1793, when it was given up and the growing of cotton, sugar, and tobacco substituted.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, France began to grow sugar cane in her American islands; in 1725, she introduced all improved methods for making sugar. From Santo Domingo, Iberville brought sugar-cane plants to Louisiana in 1700. As in the case of the other plants introduced, the French made experiments in order to find the proper Louisi-

ana conditions for the sugar cane, which they found did not thrive in a more severe climate than that of the environs of New Orleans. In 1730, a plan was worked out for the using of 325 whites and 1,900 blacks in growing sugar cane in Louisiana; at this time, the colony was producing about 2,500 pounds of sugar, annually, besides the molasses. Louisiana, in 1751, had a few sugar-cane plantations and one planter who owned a sugar mill. Ten years later, there were a number of such mills around the capital and New Orleans sugar and molasses were said to be of good quality.

The French introduced oats, barley, buckwheat, and millet, and tested out suitable Louisiana habitats for them. Hemp and flax grew wild and were mentioned by the prospectors as Mississippi Valley economic possibilities, yet the French did nothing with them because in 1720, the French government prohibited the establishment of colonial industries competitive with those in France. Hemp and flax fell under this law. Hops grew wild in all parts of Louisiana, but were cultivated for commercial purposes. The French experimented with the vines, and found the hilly uplands best suited to hop growing.

The time element shuts out of the discussion the French land system, French agricultural methods, and agricultural implements, and permits a mere mention of other industries in which the French made contributions to the industrial development of the Mississippi Valley, such as the making of pitch, tar, brick, silk, and wax, lumbering, stock raising, and the fur trade, which was responsible for the founding and early development of the city of St. Louis.

Notes

1. The facts for this paper were taken from: Transcripts, Série Colonie C^{13}, B, and G 1 (recensements, concessions), and Série Service Hydrographique, especially vol. 67^{2}, nos. 8-16, and vol. 115^{10}, in the Library of Congress; Jean, chevalier de Champigny, «Memoir of the Present State of Louisiana,» translated from the French in *Historical Collections of Louisiana* (edited by Benjamin F. French—New York, 1846-1853), vol. 5; Kerlerec's report, 1756, printed in Marc, Baron de Villiers du Terrage, *Les dernières années de la Louisiane française: le chevalier de Kerlerec d'Abbadie, Aubry, Laussat* (Paris, 1904); *Découvertes et établissements des Français dans l'ouest et dans le sud de l'Amérique septentrionale, 1614-1754* (edited by Pierre Margry—Paris, 1876-1886); *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (edited by Reuben G. Thwaites—Cleveland, 1896-1901); *Catholic Historical Publications,* vol. 10; Report of Board of Trade, 1721, published in *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (edited by Edmund B. O'Callaghan—Albany, 1856-1887); and such well-known accounts of Louisiana as those of Bossu, Dumont, Du Pratz, Gravier, and La Harpe.

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AN ADVENTUROUS VOYAGE TO FRENCH COLONIAL LOUISIANA; THE NARRATIVE OF MOTHER TRANCHEPAIN, 1727

By Marion Ware

Early in 1727, a handful of excited nuns gathered at the Ursuline monastery of Hennebon, which lay against the rolling hills of southern Brittany less than a dozen miles northeast of the French port town of Lorient, awaiting passage to the New World.[1] The exact destination of the religious was the infant but promising «city» of New Orleans, founded by the Louisiana colony's Governor Jean-Baptiste le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, a scant nine years before.[2] One outstanding need of the colonial capital on the Mississippi was for educational institutions and a primary purpose of the French *soeurs* was to found a school for girls whose parents did not wish to risk their daughters to a long and dangerous sea voyage back to the mother country or who could not afford their education in France.[3] Today, the Ursuline Academy in New Orleans represents over two hundred years of continuous educational service by dedicated Ursuline nuns in Louisiana. These first few nuns from France were the pioneers responsible for the founding of the Ursuline establishment in 1727.[4]

For Mother Superior Marie Tranchepain de St. Augustin, the leader of the pioneers, the successful establishment of the school in New Orleans was the fulfillment of a personal desire. Mother Tranchepain, a Protestant convert, had begun her novitiate in the Ursuline convent of Rouen in 1699, the very year in which colonists were first brought to Louisiana by Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville. Upon taking the religious habit, the future mother superior also took the name of Sister Marie de St. Augustin. For some time she had desired to devote her energies to missionary work, but no opportunity arose until 1726.[5]

In that year, Father Nicolas Ignace de Beaubois, Superior of the Jesuits in New Orleans, wrote to Mother Tranchepain concerning the possibility of an Ursuline establishment in Louisiana. The Jesuit father was carrying out the request of Governor Bienville in seeking a religious order which would look after the military hospital and begin a girl's school in New Orleans.[6] Mother Tranchepain, as well as two other religious from the monastery at Rouen, happily accepted the proposals of Reverend Beaubois; many sisters from other institutions also applied, and a total of twelve sisters were selected by the end of 1726.[7]

Since the colony of Louisiana was under the control of the Company of the Indies in 1726, Father Beaubois arranged for a «treaty» or contract to be drawn up between the nuns and the Company which stipulated that the Ursulines would take charge of the hospital and might begin a school in New Orleans. The «treaty» also made provision for their passage and the building of a monastery in Louisiana. It was duly signed September 13, 1726, in

Paris and several days later, the royal «Brevet» was issued giving the stamp of approval of King Louis XV to the proposed establishment.[8]

In January, 1727, at Hennebon, while waiting for passage, the nuns paid homage to Marie Tranchepain de St. Augustin whose appointment as their Mother Superior was confirmed by the Bishop of Quebec.[9] Finally the day of embarkation arrived. Accompanied by the Jesuit Fathers René Tartarin and Etienne Doutreleau and Brother Philippe Crucy, the nuns boarded a ship called the *Gironde* on February 22, 1727. The next day the ship sailed from the port of Lorient, taking five months to reach the mouth of the Mississippi River, July 23, 1727. By August 7th, the small group of nuns had arrived in New Orleans.[10]

Soon the sisters began a free day school, the first of its kind in America, and a boarding school, held classes for Indian and Negro girls and women, and accepted a few orphans. The number of this latter group was greatly increased by the Fort Rosalie Massacre (1729) at Natchez. The Ursulines even took charge of the last group of girls sent to Louisiana in 1728 by the Company of the Indies to provide wives for young men, young girls called *filles à la cassette* because of the small trunk of wearing apparel provided by the Company for each one. The nuns looked after these daughters of France until they voluntarily chose husbands.[11]

Under the contract with the Company of the Indies, the nuns were obligated to take over the Royal Hospital, a duty which could not be carried out at first because the hospital was located at one end of the city and the provisional home of the Ursulines at the other.[12] Only when the sisters moved into their monastery on July 17, 1734,[13] was it possible for them to supervise the hospital. This task was performed by them until 1770 when their small number caused them to relinquish it.[14]

Since those early colonial days, the Ursulines have been associated with many highlights in the colorful history of Louisiana as province, territory, and state. It takes but little imagination to visualize the charitable act of the sisters in accepting the children orphaned by the Indian massacre at Fort Rosalie in 1729;[15] one can hear the blasts of the guns fired under Don Alejandro O'Reilly's orders in 1769 taking the lives of those condemned for rebellion after Louisiana's transfer to Spain while nearby inside the Ursuline chapel the relatives of the doomed prayed;[16] and one can picture Andrew Jackson, triumphant in victory after the Battle of New Orleans in 1815, visiting the convent to thank the nuns for their prayers for divine aid to his soldiers.[17]

Reference to such events gives an inkling of how closely interwoven are the activities of the Ursulines with early Louisiana history. Although playing an important role upon special occasions, the greatest influence of the sisters has been felt in the continual fulfillment of their original aim in the teaching of young girls since colonial times.

While something of the zeal and courage which have always characterized the Ursulines in New Orleans is captured in the first mother superior's comparatively brief description of the voyage of the pioneer nuns of 1727,[18] the long and dangerous journey to Louisiana is the subject of another entertaining, well-written, and more detailed account by Sister Marie Madeleine Hachard de St. Stanislaus.[19] Written in vivid language, Mother Tranchepain's account provides a concise and charming story of the voyage which turned out to be a real

adventure involving pirates as well as other perils. The narrative ends with the Ursuline nuns settled in a temporary home in New Orleans while a permanent establishment was under construction. Thus began the long history of the Ursulines in Louisiana.

RELATION[20]

Of the Founders of the New Orleans [Ursuline Establishment], written to the Ursulines of France, by the first Superior, the Mother St. Augustin.

After having spent some time at the house of the good Ursulines of [Hennebon],[21] we embarked[22] the 22nd of February, 1727; but as the wind changed, it was resolved that we would not set sail until the next day, which gave us time to settle ourselves in our little room. [This latter] was a compartment which had been made for us between decks. We found ourselves a little crowded there, but we were alone which gave us a great deal of pleasure.

[The ship] set sail the 23rd of February at two in the afternoon. The weather was good and we went up on deck to take some air, but at half a league from Lorient, they encountered a rock. The shock was rude and the alarm general. [The crew] raised the sails at the same time, which was noticed from the port of Lorient. They came to our aid and worked with so much vigor that we found ourselves delivered from this first fright and in a proper condition to continue our route. It was then that each one began to pay tribute to the sea. No one of us escaped and the least sick were the sisters [Marianne] Boulanger [de St. Angélique] and [Marie Madeleine] Hachard [de St. Stanislaus], who got off with slight sick feelings.

Meanwhile the winds changed and became quite the contrary. The ship was in a continual agitation and made some bounds which overturned us one on top of the other. Scarcely was the soup on the table when a jolt on the vessel overturned it. These little accidents and others made us laugh in spite of the seasickness which is a violent malady and which reduces to the extremity. But when one experiences it, one is scarcely disturbed because one does not die from it. I was the one who suffered the most from it, but that did not disturb my vocation. Our Lord mixes a certain I do not know what to that which one does for Him so that even pain becomes mild, and it is that which my Sisters have proved better than I because they have merited it more. Moreover, great was my consolation to see that in spite of troubles, sicknesses, caused by the length of the voyage, in spite of meeting pirates, no one regretted the sacrifice which she had made to God of all her person, and the risks which we ran did not disturb them. It was upon one of these dangerous occasions that we made a vow to the Holy Virgin and to St. Francis Xavier in order to merit their protection.

Meanwhile our vessel scarcely advanced, and in fifteen days, we did not make more distance than we ought to have made in three. Our provisions diminished, especially the water; and we were reduced, as well as the crew, to one pint per day—even it was very bad. Our captain was obliged to put into port at the island of Madeira 300 leagues from Lorient.[23] As soon as the principal village of this island had caught sight of us, they came to meet us in order to know what we wanted. They were satisfied and returned. The captain then had seven cannon-shots fired to salute the town, which replied to us of the same. Those who had come to see us having said that there were on shore a religious community and some Jesuit missionaries, who have a famous college in this town, they delayed not in paying us a visit before our Reverend Fathers had had the

time to anticipate them. One cannot be more gracious than are these fathers. Only one among them could speak French, but he said a thousand obliging things in the name of all. They begged us to come to land and to take our lodgings at their house, but we declined politely. Our two Fathers went there to dine the next day and they were received with all the agreeableness and all the magnificence possible.

We also had part in their generosity, because they themselves brought to us great baskets filled with all sorts of refreshments. And during the three days that we remained anchored, these generous Fathers paid us several visits and each day they seemed to take a new pleasure in praising the zeal which had made us undertake such a long voyage. The greatest pain which they said they had was of not being able to do us more good, esteeming what they did as nothing in comparison to their good will. These Fathers wore large spectacles on the nose, in the fashion of Portugal, and I noticed one who took them off in order to read something, which made us laugh. Moreover, their manners are about the same as those of our French Fathers, except that they wear their hair short.

We also received the visit of all the pupils of the Jesuits. They carried a rosary in their hands which keeps them in contenance, but it is said that they are not more devout because of it. The most important gentlemen of the island paid us a visit, but we did not see any women. In this country they are not visible and are not seen but through gratings. They do not come out but to go to Mass, and all together, so that they form a kind of procession. They walk covered with large veils, in silence or saying their rosary.

There are two communities on this island. The principal one is the order of St. Claire, and the abbess is a Portuguese princess. As they are more free than the secular women, their manners are also more easy. They had soon learned the news of our arrival because the abbess wrote me in a very obliging and very flattering manner to invite me to go to their house with all my Religious. Her style is very friendly and she gave us great praises. I replied to her the best that I could, and she received my letter with all the marks of esteem and friendship that I would have been able to wish from an equal. The next day a young woman from the ship having paid her a visit on my part, was overwhelmed with courtesies and gifts. They reiterated to her their entreaties to persuade us to go to their house; but not considering it proper to do so,[24] and the crew having secured the necessary provisions, we thanked the town by a cannon-shot, and we stood out to sea to continue our route.

The wind was favorable only during two days. Suddenly it changed and we took a long while to make 200 leagues, at the end of which they discovered a pirate. Immediately the ordinary preparations for defense were made; each one armed himself and all the cannons were loaded. It was decided that during the combat we would be closed in the safest place between decks. The women said goodby to their husbands. Mademoiselle La Chaise, who had wished to be with us, wept bitterly for fear of losing her brother, who is one of the officers of our ship. As for us, thanks to Our Lord, no one showed any weakness. After all, the pirate, seeing himself too weak, withdrew, and left us in liberty: sad liberty for some Religious to be on a vessel where it is impossible to have a moment to oneself. However, we carried on our spiritual exercises, but in the milieu of the dissipation which is found among people who think of nothing but amusing themselves in order to pass the time, and that is what has pained us the most.

We finally arrived on the Tropic [of Cancer]. It was Good Friday, and the holiness of the day having prevented the ceremony of baptism of which you have no doubt heard spoken, it was postponed to Holy Saturday during the afternoon. I will not give you the details of this ceremony which is but an amusement for the sailors. Moreover, one is able to exempt oneself from it only with money, and as we are more than twenty, including the servants of the fathers as well as ours, they had of our part a good little sum. Those who did not wish to give anything received several buckets of water over the body, but the great heat was able to render this bath agreeable to them.

Some days afterwards we had a second alarm by the encounter of a vessel which followed us nearby. [Our ship] stood on the defensive and when we [the ships] were approaching one another, they closed us in the place which was assigned to us. They were on the point of firing above, but the enemy withdrew a little ways, which gave us time to have supper. As it was noted that the enemy approached from time to time, they kept good guard all night. We went to bed expecting always that they would come to get us up. The enemy withdrew the next day. The sea continued to give fright and it was sometimes so furious that we believed we would be engulfed by it. But we suffered more from the length of the voyage, longing more and more for this land so long and so ardently desired, which made us redouble our prayers in order to obtain a more favorable weather.

Our Lord accorded us sometimes several hours of good wind and with the aid of this succor we arrived at Bay St. Louis,[25] where we had to cast anchor. As there was no religious house nor person of our acquaintance in this place, we did not count on descending but to go for a walk and have a care to our linen which we needed to bleach. But the first evening that we had dropped anchor, the Directors of the Company desired to pay us a visit and declared that they wished that we would stay at their house all the time the vessel was anchored. We could not resist such pressing offers and we promised to go there the next day. These two gentlemen[26] proved to be of good breeding and of perfect merit. They entertained us once magnificently and during the fifteen days which we spent at their house, we took our meals privately, that is to say with our Reverend Fathers only, and we were treated with abundance.

Two days after our arrival Monsieur the Governor[27] came to pay us a visit. He is a gentleman from Paris, a little aged, but enjoying health and a very gracious manner of receiving. He had us twice to dine with a French magnificence, and we had complete liberty to devote ourselves to our spiritual exercises This gentleman evinced to me a great desire to have an establishment of Ursulines in that country. The Directors of the Company have the same desire for the education of the young Creoles, who have many dispositions. It is necessary to hope that we shall have a house of our order in that country. I say this in passing in order to inflame anyone with zeal for the salvation of souls. What good fortune to be consumed by such a glorious fire! What ought to excite the zeal, is the little of religion which is there; the most devout are those who do not lead a scandalous life. The day that we dined at the house of Monsieur the Governor, he wished for us to visit the fort, situated on the sea, and which, according to the connoisseurs, is a rare thing in its style. We found there two or three garrisons drawn up in order under arms to receive us at the sound of drums in order to do us more honor. They served us some refreshments.

Finally we embarked the 19th, over-

whelmed with courtesies and gifts. Moreover, they offered us various refreshments to soften the rest of our voyage which was still 500 leagues.

The wind at first favorable, reversed, and the calms delayed our course considerably. We met two enemy vessels, but we got rid of them by putting ourselves in a state of defense. We hope in spite of this mishap to arrive for the feast of the Blessed Sacrament, but Our Lord reserved for us a greater trial for the end, for the contrary winds conjointly with the currents pushed us in spite of ourselves toward the Ile Blanche at the moment when we awaited with impatience the pleasure of seeing the first lands of the Mississippi. We felt a great deal of joy at the approach of this land, but good God! but this joy was short! and but it was dearly bought. At the moment when we thought the least of it, occupied with amusing ourselves on deck, suddenly the vessel ran aground so rudely and with so many shocks that we believed ourselves lost without resource.

The captain and the crew lowered the sails and made diverse manoeuvres in order to draw us from the danger, but all was useless, and by means of the sounding-line they discovered that the vessel was sunk five feet in the sand. The captain decided to lighten it. They began with the cannons which they arranged on two pieces of wood so that they could not sink to the bottom, and they abandoned them to the sea. Then they removed the ballast composed of pebbles, lead and scrap-iron. All that not sufficing to lighten the vessel, they decided to throw out the trunks which were in great number. Ours were the first; also it was for us to make the first sacrifice. We were not long in reasoning with ourselves and we consented with good heart to see ourselves stripped of all in order to practice a great poverty. They had assured us that there was nothing to fear for our lives, being so near land, but that we ought not to descend but at the last extremity since that island was populated only by some very cruel savages. Finally at the moment when we thought to see our trunks thrown out, the captain changed his mind and had the sugar thrown out, which was in great quantity. Our Reverend Fathers and we lost a barrel[28] of 300 pounds that the Directors of the Company had given us.

Nevertheless, the ship was too heavy and they still wished to return to our trunks, but by the permission of God and the protection of the Blessed Virgin, which we were beseeching during all that time, every time that they were going to take our trunks the captain changed his mind and had another thing taken. They threw out then 60 barrels[29] of brandy and a large quantity of salmon, after which they made further efforts to draw out the vessel. Finally they succeeded, which filled us with a great joy. That peril lasted twenty-four hours, and very few persons went to bed that night.

A few hours afterwards they resumed the journey, but scarcely had we made a quarter of a league, when the vessel grounded a second time with so much violence and so frequent shocks that no more hope remained to us than in the omnipotence of God. The captain even was quite surprised that the vessel could resist such a long time and he asserted that out of ten, nine would have been broken. All the crew was struck with consternation. As for me, I avow that I have never seen death so near and although I always trusted in the aid of the Blessed Virgin, the fear painted on all the faces, led me to believe that our last hour had arrived. What consoled me assuredly, was the nobility of my sisters who sustained themselves always in a spirit of sacrifice, with a calm [composure] and a surprising peace. But the Lord was contented at the time with

our good will, and give His blessing to the proceedings of the captain and to the labor of the sailors and passengers who did not spare themselves in these encounters. The Reverend Father René Tartarin directed them. We were again that time drawn from danger and the captain had the Te Deum sung in expression of gratitude.

After that last danger the ship's boat went always in advance and an officer had the sounding-line in his hand until we stood out to sea. Then we lacked water. The heat was excessive. We suffered a great deal from thirst which made us exchange our wine for water, an exchange which was made, however, only bottle for bottle; yet we were happy to have it at that price. This lasted almost fifteen days. Because the winds and the currents were almost always contrary to us, it was necessary to drop anchor several times a day. Finally we arrived in sight of a land that was unknown to us and that we believed inhabited by savages on account of the large fires which were lighted there. Nevertheless, they sent a boat to search for some water there. A few hours after the departure of the boat, the wind became favorable and the captain, not wishing to lose the opportunity to advance, fired a cannon-shot in order to signal the officer to return, and at the same time he raised the anchor. But the officer having taken the noise of the cannon for thunder, continued to advance toward the land, which left us in a great anxiety because the sea was furious. He returned, however, the next day. That island is called St. Rose [modern Santa Rosa]. We remained there three or four days waiting for a favorable wind.

Having set sail we continued our route and a few days from there we discovered the island Dauphine and at the same time a brigantine which came towards me. This sight caused us a great deal of joy, hoping to learn some news of our New Orleans. Our hope was not in vain, and we had the pleasure of seeing approach this brigantine whose captain was one of ours. He asked to greet us and it was from him that we learned for the first time news of the Reverend Father [Nicolas Ignace] Beaubois, who was waiting for us with impatience, that our lodging was all prepared to receive us and that they were beginning to build our monastery. I avow that it was the first exterior joy that I had tasted since our departure from France, and it was so heartfelt that it made me, as well as our sisters, forget all our troubles and past fatigues. We continued in company of the brigantine towards the island Dauphine, where we landed in order to obtain water in the fear of the calms which are frequent in these parts.

Scarcely had we landed when the wind became favorable. We resumed our journey toward the Balize, where we arrived finally the 23rd of July 1727, five months day for day since our departure. Balize is a seaport at the entrance of the Mississippi. Monsieur Duverger,[30] who commanded it for the Company, came soon to see us and offered us his house, while waiting until we could procure some carriages to take us to New Orleans. We accepted that offer made with such good grace. We went in a shallop with one part of our effects and accompanied by Monsieur Duverger. The weather was very bad, the shallop overloaded, the sailors drunk, and we found ourselves once more in an imminent peril from which we would not have been able to extract ourselves if Monsieur Duverger had not put into port at the island of Cannes near Balize. We had a great deal of trouble in landing because of the contrary wind and we ran the risk of passing the night there among some men employed to build a fort under the direction of Monsieur Duverger. But this gentleman sent to look for some pirogues and we were obliged to separate into two bands. We arrived at his house, and he treated us the best

way that it was possible for him. Monsieur Duverger is very generous, and although he is young and unmarried, he leads a very regulated and very solitary life, being applied without respite to the affairs which are entrusted to him. We remained at his house until the 29th.

The Father Tartarin had preceded us several days to go to announce our arrival to the Reverend Father Beaubois, whom he agreeably surprised, for our long navigation had alarmed the whole country and they believed us lost. The Reverend Father Beaubois delayed not in sending to look for us. Not being able to come himself on account of sickness, he charged Monsieur Massy, brother of our postulant [Claude Massy] with this commission. This gentleman brought me two letters: one from Monsieur Perrier,[31] commandant of Louisiana and knight of St. Louis, and the other from Monsieur [Jacques de] la Chaise, director general [of the Company]. They both evinced a great impatience to see us, and as the shallop was too small to hold all our company, it was necessary to separate us. I went in the pirogue with five of the youngest of our sisters, accompanied by the Reverend Father D'Outreleau, by the Brother Crucy and by a gentleman. Our other sisters went in the shallop with Monsieur Massy, our two maids and two servants of our Reverend Fathers.

That little voyage which was only thirty leagues has been accompanied by incredible hardships. The shallop going too slowly, we took the lead. We left the day of St. Ignace, but it was necessary to stop every night, and one hour before sun set, in order to have the time to arrange our mosquito-nets, because one is assailed by insects whose sting causes pains almost insupportable. We went to bed twice in the middle of mud and waters which penetrated us, and our mattresses almost swam in the water. All this is harassing at the time but one is compensated afterwards by the pleasure which is felt by each one in relating his little adventures, and then one is quite surprised by the strength and by the courage which the good God gives in these encounters, which proves well that He never abandons us, and does not permit that we be tried beyond our endurances giving always graces proportioned to the trials which He sends us.

The ardent desire which we had of arriving at the end made us endure all the troubles with a great joy. When we were at eight or ten leagues from New Orleans, we began to encounter some plantations. They who stopped us vied with each other to make us enter their homes, and everywhere we were received with a joy beyond all expression. From all sides they promised us boarding students and some wished already to give them to us. We remained thus several days on various plantations. Finally the Reverend Father René Tartarin, who had gone ahead of us, came back to inform us that the Reverend Father Beaubois awaited us. We left then at three o'clock in the morning and we arrived at five o'clock, the 6th of August. Our Sisters did not arrive until the next day.

It would be too long and even useless, to attempt to express to you the diverse sentiments of my heart at the sight of a land after which I longed for so many years. You have too much zeal, My Reverend Mother, to doubt the excess of my consolation in landing. We found few persons on account of the hour, and we made our way towards the house of the Reverend Father Beaubois, where we soon met him, coming to us leaning on a cane because of his great weakness. He appeared pale and drawn but soon his face became animated by the joy which he felt upon seeing us. He made us rest a little and served us an excellent

breakfast which was often interrupted by a great number of his friends who came to greet us. Towards ten or eleven o'clock the Reverend Father conducted us to our house. It is a house that the Company rents while waiting for the monastery to be built. It is directly at one end of the city, and the hospital at the other. Thus we cannot take charge of it until our monastery be finished.

The inhabitants of New Orleans take care that we lack nothing: it is a question who will send us the most. This generosity puts us under obligation towards almost everybody. Among our friends the most devoted are Monsieur the Commandant [Perrier] and his Dame [Catherine le Chibelier], who are persons full of merit and of very pleasant society. This gentleman has won for himself the esteem of all the country, which he has travelled for some months, and he has succeeded in calming the troubles which reign in the town. We receive also a great deal of politeness and of kind attentions on the part of Monsieur la Chaise, director general of the Company; he has not yet refused us anything which we have asked of him.

Finally, all makes us hope that our establishment will turn to the greatest glory of God, and that with time it will produce great good for the salvation of souls, which is our principal end. For that we have need of prayers; I ask you for them My Reverend Mother, and hope that your zeal will get us some from all the communities of the order with which you are in correspondence.

I wish that the reading of this relation could embrace the hearts with the love of Our Lord and dispose the subjects which He and His Blessed Mother prepared to come to us in aid. Let the length of the voyage and the hardships that we have endured rebuff no one. Oh! if one knew how God recompenses magnificently what is done for Him, one would not take into any consideration all the troubles by which it is necessary to pass! As far as possible we will take religious only from thirty to forty years of age.

The Reverend Father Beaubois says the Mass to us every day, but he does not permit the Blessed Sacrament.

Let God be ever praised and adored by all the earth.

I have the honor to be, &c.

Sr. Marie de St. Augustin,

Tranchepain.
Superior.

Notes

1. Henry Churchill Semple (ed.), *The Ursulines in New Orleans and Our Lady of Prompt Succor: A Record of Two Centuries, 1725-1925* (New York, 1925), 10, 185. Marie Tranchepain de St. Augustin, *Relation du Voyage Des premières Ursulines à la Nouvelle Orléans et de leur establissment en cette ville* (New York, 1859), 5.

2. (Mary Teresa Austin Carroll), *The Ursulines in Louisiana, 1727-1824* (New Orleans, 1886), 3.

3. Henry Renshaw, «The Louisiana Ursulines», Louisiana Historical Society *Publications*, II, part 4 (December, 1901), 25-26; Carroll, *The Ursulines in Louisiana*, 4-5; Roger Baudier, *The Catholic Church in Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1939), 103; See Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 225-226, for a description of New Orleans at the time in which Sister Marie Madeleine Hachard writes of a song that compares New Orleans to Paris.

4. Tranchepain, *Relation du Voyage*, 5-7.

5. Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 6-10; Mary Austin Cauvin, «The French Ursulines in Colonial Louisiana, 1727-1824», (M.A. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1939), 117; Tranchepain, *Relation du Voyage*, 55-56; Baudier, *The Catholic Church in Louisiana*, 103.

6. Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 3-4, 9; Cauvin, «The French Ursulines», 68-69.

7. Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 9-10; Cauvin, «The French Ursulines», 69. Different accounts vary as to the exact number of nuns who first came to Louisiana. See Tranchepain, *Relation du Voyage*, 6, for a list of 10 names not including that of Mother Tranchepain. See Heloise Hulse Cruzat, «The Ursulines of Louisiana», *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, II (January, 1919), 8, fn. 3, for a list of 12 names.

8. Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 10; Cauvin, «The French Ursulines», 69. For translations of treaty, application to king for approval of treaty, and royal brevet giving approval see Cruzat, «The Ursulines of Louisiana», 5-8, fn. 1, 2; Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 167-176. (Article XXIV of treaty in latter citation is incorrectly translated.) For treaty in French see «Traité de la Compagnie des Indes avec les Ursulines», Louisiana Historical Society *Publications*, II, part 4 (December, 1901), 37-42. For royal brevet in French see Tranchepain, *Relation du Voyage*, 61-62. For photostatic copies of treaty, application to king for approval of treaty, and royal brevet see Cauvin, «The French Ursulines», appendix, 177 ff.

9. Tranchepain, *Relation du Voyage*, 5.

10. Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 10-12; Albert Hubert Biever, *The Jesuits in New Orleans and the Mississippi Valley* (New Orleans, 1924), 29, 34.

11. Cauvin, «The French Ursulines», 85-91. For early educational work of the Ursulines in Louisiana see also Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 198-200; Baudier, *The Catholic Church in Louisiana*, 104-105; Biever, *The Jesuits in New Orleans and the Mississippi Valley*, 34-35; Martin Luther Riley, «The Development of Education in Louisiana», *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XIX (July, 1936), 601-607, 617-618, 621-622.

12. Renshaw, «The Louisiana Ursulines», 29; Tranchepain, *Relation du Voyage*, 34; Cauvin, *The French Ursulines*, 88. For detailed descriptions of provisional and all subsequent homes of the nuns up to the 1912 move to their present loca-

tion on State Street, see Samuel Wilson, Jr., «An Architectural History of the Royal Hospital and the Ursuline Convent of New Orleans», *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXIX (July, 1946), 559-659 *passim*.

13. Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 22; Wilson, «An Architectural History», 590.

14. Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 24-27, 84. Semple suggests that the main factor causing the nuns to give up the hospital was not numbers but the aim of complying with more rigid Spanish customs in regard to cloister rules. For additional references concerning the nuns and the Royal Hospital see John Duffy (ed.), *The Rudolph Matas History of Medicine in Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, 1958), I, 89-103; Wilson, «An Architectural History», 621.

15. Cauvin, «The French Ursulines», 93-94; Renshaw, «The Louisiana Ursulines», 29.

16. Renshaw, «The Louisiana Ursulines», 34; Cruzat, «The Ursulines of Louisiana», 14.

17. Cauvin, «The French Ursulines», 149-152; Carroll, *The Ursulines in Louisiana*, 35-37; Renshaw, «The Louisiana Ursulines», 35-36.

18. Mother Tranchepain's account in French may be found in Tranchepain, *Relation du Voyage*, 13-36. As far as can be determined, no complete English translation of this account has ever been published. An unpublished English translation, Marie Tranchepain de Saint Augustin, *Journal of the Voyage of the First Ursulines to New Orleans, 1727*, translated by Olivia Blanchard (New Orleans, 1940) was made for the survey of Federal Archives in Louisiana under the auspices of the Works Projects Administration.

19. Marie Madeleine Hachard de St. Stanislaus, *Relation du Voyage des Ursulines de Rouen à la Nouvelle Orleans* avec une introduction et des notes par Gabriel Gravier (Paris, 1872), LVI-LVII. In the introduction, Gravier contends that the Tranchepain account, save for some small additions by Mother Tranchepain, was written by Sister Hachard, most likely under her mother superior's directions. Many identical phrases and others differing only in arrangement of words and verb tenses lend credence to this claim. Only minor differences of fact exist between the two narratives. The most outstanding difference is in length; the Tranchepain relation leaves out numerous details incorporated in the Hachard relation. The shorter relation may be described as a summary of the other. Certainly, the author of whichever account was written last, must have been familiar with the one written first. For an English translation of the Hachard narrative see Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 201-224.

20. Translated from a French publication Marie Tranchepain de St. Augustin, *Relation du Voyage*, 13-36. In translating the text, capitalization and punctuation have been made to conform to modern English usage.

21. Tranchepain, *Relation du Voyage*, 5.

22. The nuns went the short distance from Hennebon on a ferry to Lorient, in Brittany, where they embarked on a ship named the *Gironde*. See Hachard's description of the voyage in Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 186-187, 190, 192, 201.

23. The ship put into port at the island of Madeira on March 12, 1727. See Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 204.

24. The nuns did not think it proper to appear in public in a place where secular women did not do so. See Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans*, 206.

25. The Hachard account gives this place as the Quay

St. Louis, a port in Santo Domingo or Haiti. See Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans,* 209.

26. The gentlemen were named Cirou [possibly Ciron] and Girard. See Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans,* 209-210; Dunbar Rowland and Albert Sanders (eds. and trans.), *Mississippi Provincial Archives,* 1701-1729, *French Dominion* (2 vols., Jackson, 1929), II, 546.

27. The governor was a Mr. Brache. See Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans,* 210.

28. The Hachard account says that two barrels were lost by the nuns and the fathers. See Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans,* 213.

29. The Hachard account says that 61 barrels of brandy were thrown out. See Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans,* 214.

30. Duverger is spelled Duvergé and de Verges in the Hachard account. See Semple, *The Ursulines in New Orleans,* 217-218.

31. Usually spelled Perier. Etienne Boucher de la Perier de Salvert had become governor of Louisiana in 1726.

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THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COLONIST

By Antoine-Simon Le Page Du Pratz

Being arrived at the Creek Choupic the Sieur Lavigne, a Canadian, lodged me in a cabin of the Aquelou-Pissas, whose village he had bought. He gave others to my workmen for their lodging; and we were all happy to find, upon our arrival, that we were under shelter, in a place that was uninhabited. A few days after my arrival I bought an Indian female slave of one of the inhabitants, in order to have a person who could dress our victuals, as I perceived the inhabitants did all they could to entice away our labourers, and to gain them by fair promises. As for my slave and me, we did not understand one another's language; but I made myself to be understood by signs, which these natives comprehend very easily: she was of the nation of the Chitimachas, with whom the French had been at war for some years.

I went to view a spot on St. John's Creek, about half a league distant from the place where the capital was to be founded, which was yet only marked out by a hut, covered with palmetto-leaves, and which the commandant had caused to be built for his own lodging; and after him for M. Paillou, whom he left commandant of that post. I had chosen that place preferably to any others, with a view to dispose more easily of my goods and provisions, and that I might not have them to transport to a great distance. I told M. Paillou of my choice, who came and put me in possession, in the name of the West-India company.

I built a hut upon my settlement, about forty yards from the creek of St. John, till I could build my house, and lodging for my people. As my hut was composed of very combustible materials, I caused a fire to be made at a distance, about half way from the creek, to avoid accidents: which occasioned an adventure, that put me in mind of the prejudices they have in Europe, from the relations that are commonly current. The account I am going to give of it, may have upon those who think as I did then, the same effect that it had upon me.

It was almost night, when my slave perceived, within two yards of the fire, a young alligator, five feet long, which beheld the fire without moving. I was in the garden hard by, when she made me repeated signs to come to her; I ran with speed, and upon my arrival she shewed me the crocodile, without speaking to me; the little time that I examined it, I could see, its eyes were so fixed on the fire, that all our motions could not take them off. I ran to my cabin to look for my gun, as I am a pretty good marksman: but what was my surprize, when I came out, and saw the girl with a great stick in her hand attacking the monster! Seeing me arrive, she began to smile, and said many things, which I did not comprehend.

But she made me understand, by signs, that there was no occasion for a gun to kill such a beast; for the stick she shewed me was sufficient for the purpose.

The next day the former master of my slave came to ask me for some salad plants; for I was the only one who had any garden-stuff, having taken care to preserve the seeds I had brought over with me. As he understood the language of the natives, I begged him to ask the girl, why she had killed the alligator so rashly. He began to laugh, and told me, that all new comers were afraid of those creatures, although they have no reason to be so: and that I ought not to be surprized at what the girl had done, because here nation inhabited the borders of a lake, which was full of those creatures; that the children, when they saw the young ones come on land, pursued them, and killed them, by the assistance of the people of the cabin, who made good cheer of them.

I was pleased with my habitation, and I had good reasons, which I have already related, to make me prefer it to others; notwithstanding I had room to believe, that the situation was none of the healthiest, the country about it being very damp. But this cause of an unwholesome air does not exist at present, since they have cleared the ground, and made a bank before the town. The quality of that land is very good, for what I had sown came up very well. Having found in the spring some peach-stones which began to sprout, I planted them; and the following autumn they had made shoots, four feet high, with branches in proportion.

Notwithstanding these advantages, I took a resolution to quit this settlement, in order to make another one, about a hundred leagues higher up; and I shall give the reasons, which, in my opinion, will appear sufficient to have made me take that step.

My surgeon came to take his leave of me, letting me know, he could be of no service to me, near such a town as was forming; where there was a much abler surgeon than himself; and that they had talked to him so favourably of the post of the Natchez, that he was very desirous to go there, and the more so, as that place, being unprovided with a surgeon, might be more to his advantage. To satisfy me of the truth of what he told me, he went immediately and brought one of the old inhabitants, of whom I had bought my slave, who confirmed the account he had given me of the fineness of the country of the Natchez. The account of the old man, joined to many other advantages, to be found there, had made him think of abandoning the place where we were, to settle there; and he reckoned to be abundantly repaid for it in a little time.

My slave heard the discourse that I have related, and as she began to understand French, and I the language of the country, she addressed herself to me thus:

> «Thou art going, then, to that country; the sky is much finer there; game is in much greater plenty; and as I have relations, who retired there in the war which we had with the French, they will bring us every thing we want: they tell me that country is very fine, that they live well in it, and to a good old age.»

Two days afterwards I told M. Hubert what I had heard of the country of the Natchez. He made answer, that he was so persuaded of the goodness of that part of the country, that he was making ready to go there himself, to take up his grant, and to establish a large settlement for the company:

and, continued he,

> «I shall be very glad, if you will do the same: we shall be company to one another, and you will unquestionably do your business better there than here.»

This determined me to follow his advice: I quitted my settlement, and took lodgings in the town, till I should find an opportunity to depart, and receive some negroes whom I expected in a short time. My stay at New Orleans appeared long, before I heard of the arrival of the negroes. Some days after the news of their arrival, M. Hubert brought me two good ones, which had fallen to me by lot. One was a young negro about twenty, with his wife of the same age; which cost me both together 1320 livres, or 55l. sterling.

Two days after that I set off with them alone in a pettyaugre (a large canoe), because I was told we should make much better speed in such a vessel, than in the boats that went with us; and that I had only to take powder and ball with me, to provide my whole company with game sufficient to maintain us; for which purpose it was necessary to make use of a paddle, instead of oars, which make too much noise for the game. I had a barrel of powder, with fifteen pounds of shot, which I thought would be sufficient for the voyage: but I found by experience, that this was not sufficient for the vast plenty of game that is to be met with upon that river, without ever going out of your way. I had not gone above twenty-eight leagues, to the grant of M. Paris du Vernai, when I was obliged to borrow of him fifteen pounds of shot more. Upon this I took care of my ammunition, and shot nothing but what was fit for our provision; such as wild ducks, summer ducks, teal, and saw-bills. Among the rest I killed a carancro, wild geese, cranes, and flamingo's; I likewise often killed young alligators; the tail of which was a feast for the slaves, as well as for the French and Canadian rowers.

Among others things I cannot omit to give an account of a monstrous large alligator I killed with a musquet ball, as it lay upon the bank, about ten feet above the edge of the water. We measured it, and found it to be nineteen feet long; its head three feet and a half long, above two feet nine inches broad, and the other parts in proportion: at the belly it was two feet two inches thick; and it infected the whole air with the odor of musk. M. Mehane told me, he had killed one twenty-two feet long.

After several days navigation, we arrived at Tonicas on Christmas eve; where we heard mass from M. d'Avion, of the foreign missions, with whom we passed the rest of the holy-days, on account of the good reception and kind invitation he gave us. I asked him, if his great zeal for the salvation of the natives was attended with any success; he answered me, that notwithstanding the profound respect the people shewed him, it was with the greatest difficulty he could get leave to baptize a few children at the point of death; that those of an advanced age excused themselves from embracing our holy religion, because they are too old, say they, to accustom themselves to rules, that are so difficult to be observed; that the chief, who had killed the physician, that attended his only son in a distemper of which he died, had taken a resolution to fast every Friday while he lived, in remorse for his inhumanity with which he had been so sharply reproached by him. This grand chief attended both morning and evening prayers; the women and children likewise assisted regularly at them; but the men, who did not come very often, took more pleasure in ringing the bell. In other respects, they did not suffer this zealous pastor to want for any thing, but furnished

him with whatever he desired.

We were yet twenty-five leagues to the end of our journey to the Natchez, and we left the Tonicas, where we saw nothing interesting, if it were not several steep hills, which stand together; among which there is one that they name the White Hill, because they find in it several veins of an earth, that is white, greasy, and very fine, with which I have seen very good potters ware made. On the same hill there are veins of ochre, of which the Natchez had just taken some to stain their earthen ware, which looked well enough; when it was besmeared with ochre, it became red on burning.

At last we arrived at the Natchez, after a voyage of twenty-four leagues; and we put on shore at a landing-place, which is at the foot of a hill two hundred feet high, upon the top of which Fort Rosalie [Fort Rosalie, in the country of the Natchez, was at first pitched upon for the metropolis of this colony. But though it be necessary to begin by a settlement near the sea; yet if ever Louisiana comes to be in a flourishing condition, as it may very well be, it appears to me, that the capital of it cannot be better situated than in this place. It is not subject to inundations of the river; the air is pure; the country very extensive; the land fit for every thing, and well watered; it is not at too great a distance from the sea, and nothing hinders vessels to go up to it. In fine, it is within reach of every place intended to be settled. Charlevoix, Hist. de la N. France, III. 415. This is on the east side of the Mississippi, and appears to be the first post on that river which we ought to secure.] is built, surrounded only with pallisadoes. About the middle of the hill stands the magazine, nigh to some houses of the inhabitants, who are settled there, because the ascent is not so steep in that place; and it is for the same reason that the magazine is built there. When you are upon the top of this hill, you discover the whole country, which is an extensive beautiful plain, with several little hills interspersed here and there, upon which the inhabitants have built and made their settlements. The prospect of it is charming.

On our arrival at the Natchez I was very well received by M. Loire de Flaucourt, storekeeper of this post, who regaled us with the game that abounds in this place; and after two days I hired a house near the fort, for M. Hubert and his family, on their arrival, till he could build upon his own plantation. He likewise desired me to choose two convenient parcels of land, whereon to settle two considerable plantations, one for the company, and the other for himself. I went to them in two or three days after my arrival, with an old inhabitant for my guide, and to shew me the proper places, and at the same time to choose a spot of ground for myself; this last I pitched upon the first day, because it is more easy to choose for one's self than for others.

I found upon the main road that leads from the chief village of the Natchez to the fort, about an hundred paces from this last, a cabin of the natives upon the road side, surrounded with a spot of cleared ground, the whole of which I bought by means of an interpreter. I made this purchase with the more pleasure, as I had upon the spot, wherewithal to lodge me and my people, with all my effects: the cleared ground was about six acres, which would form a garden and a plantation for tobacco, which was then the only commodity cultivated by the inhabitants. I had water convenient for my house, and all my land was very good. On one side stood a rising ground with a gentle declivity, covered with a thick field of canes, which always grow upon the rich lands; behind that was a great meadow, and on the other side was a forest of white walnuts (Hiccories) of nigh fifty acres,

covered with grass knee deep. All this piece of ground was in general good, and contained about four hundred acres of a measure greater than that of Paris: the soil is black and light.

The other two pieces of land, which M. Hubert had ordered me to look for, I took up on the border of the little river of the Natchez, each of them half a league from the great village of that nation, and a league from the fort; and my plantation stood between these two and the fort, bounding the two others. After this I took up my lodging upon my own plantation, in the hut I had bought of the Indian, and put my people in another, which they built for themselves at the side of mine; so that I was lodged pretty much like our woodcutters in France, when they are at work in the woods.

As soon as I was put in possession of my habitation, I went with an interpreter to see the other fields, which the Indians had cleared upon my land, and bought them all, except one, which an Indian would never sell to me: it was situated very convenient for me, I had a mind for it, and would have given him a good price; but I could never make him agree to my proposals. He gave me to understand, that without selling it, he would give it up to me, as soon as I should clear my ground to his; and that while he stayed on his own ground near me, I should always find him ready to serve me, and that he would go a-hunting and fishing for me. This answer satisfied me, because I must have had twenty negroes, before I could have been able to have reached him; they assured me likewise, that he was an honest man; and far from having any occasion to complain of him as a neighbour, his stay there was extremely serviceable to me.

I had not been settled at the Natchez six months, when I found a pain in my thigh, which, however, did not hinder me to go about my business. I consulted our surgeon about it, who caused me to be bleeded; on which the humour fell upon the other thigh, and fixed there with such violence, that I could not walk without extreme pain. I consulted the physicians and surgeons of New Orleans, who advised me to use aromatic baths; and if they proved of no service, I must go to France, to drink the waters, and to bathe in them. This answer satisfied me so much the less, as I was neither certain of my cure by that means, nor would my present situation allow me to go to France. This cruel distemper, I believe, proceeded from the rains, with which I was wet, during our whole voyage; and might be some effects of the fatigues I had undergone in war, during several campaigns I had made in Germany.

As I could not go out of my hut, several neighbours were so good as to come and see me, and every day we were no less than twelve at table from the time of our arrival, which was on the fifth of January, 1720. Among the rest F. de Ville, who waited there, in his journey to the Illinois, till the ice, which began to come down from the north, was gone. His conversation afforded me great satisfaction in my confinement, and allayed the vexation I was under from my two negroes being run away. In the mean time my distemper did not abate, which made me resolve to apply to one of the Indian conjurers, who are both surgeons, divines, and sorcerers; and who told me he would cure me by sucking the place where I felt my pain. He made several scarifications upon the part with a sharp flint, each of them about as large as the prick of a lancet, and in such a form, that he could suck them all at once, which gave me extreme pain for the space of half an hour. The next day I found myself a little better, and walked about into my field, where they advised me to put myself in the hands of some of the Natchez, who, they said, did surprizing cures, of which they

told me many instances, confirmed by creditable people. In such a situation a man will do any thing for a cure, especially as the remedy, which they told me of, was very simple: it was only a poultice, which they put upon the part affected, and in eight days time I was able to walk to the fort, finding myself perfectly cured, as I have felt no return of my pain since that time. This was, without doubt, a great satisfaction to a young man, who found himself otherwise in good health, but had been confined to the house for four months and a half, without being able to go out a moment; and gave me as much joy as I could well have, after the loss of a good negroe, who died of a defluxion on the breast, which he catched by running away into the woods, where his youth and want of experience made him believe he might live without the toils of slavery; but being found by the Tonicas, constant friends of the French, who live about twenty leagues from the Natchez, they carried him to their village, where he and his wife were given to a Frenchman, for whom they worked, and by that means got their livelihood; till M. de Montplaisir sent them home to me.

This M. de Montplaisir, one of the most agreeable gentlemen in the colony, was sent by the company from Clerac in Gascony, to manage their plantation at the Natchez, to make tobacco upon it, and to shew the people the way of cultivating and curing it; the company having learned, that this place produced excellent tobacco, and that the people of Clerac were perfectly well acquainted with the culture and way of managing it.

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FROM AFRICAN CAPTIVITY TO AMERICAN SLAVERY: THE INTRODUCTION OF BLACK LABORERS TO COLONIAL LOUISIANA

By Daniel H. Usner, Jr.

The importation of Africans to Louisiana in 1719 immediately affected the French colony and inexorably altered its destiny. Since 1700 explorers and colonists qualified their predictions of prosperity on the lower Mississippi Valley with exhortations for African slaves. For twenty years the strategically located garrison on the Gulf of Mexico remained only a nominal buffer against British and Spanish encroachments on the Mississippi. Canadian soldiers, sailors, and *voyageurs* were both unwilling and ill-prepared to deforest the land and cultivate the soil. A diminishing store of merchandise aggravated their precarious dependence on surrounding Indian nations for food supplies. After France conceded its languishing settlement to John Law's company in 1717, over one thousand European criminals and contract laborers arrived. Most of them died of disease or starvation; the remaining population in 1721 consisted of 178 *engagés* working for 853 French settlers.[1]

Amidst this wasteful transportation of European vagabonds, prostitutes, and salt smugglers, five hundred Africans arrived from Guinea during the summer of 1719. In contrast to white paupers and prisoners, these black captives were eagerly anticipated and carefully selected. The company instructed the two slaver captains destined for Louisiana «not to trade for any negro or negress who is more than thirty years of age, as far as possible, or less than eight.» The colony, however, needed much more than «well-made and healthy Africans». Captains Du Coulombier and Herpin were ordered to purchase «a few who know how to cultivate rice,» as well as some «hogsheads of rice suitable for planting.» In their search for an agricultural staple and labor force, Louisiana colonists were conscious of examples and limitations imposed by a firmly established South Atlantic economy. Since wealthy French and English planters dominated sugar production in the West Indies, they turned to rice, indigo, tobacco, and silk as potential sources of commerce and wealth. Ambitious colonists pleaded agricultural ignorance and requested permission to purchase Negroes who understood the cultivation of these crops from Santo Domingo and Carolina. An avaricious glance at production in the Caribbean and Carolina motivated French efforts to procure knowledgeable agriculturists from West Africa.[2]

Before any slavers reached Louisiana, colonists attempted several times to obtain Negroes «to clear» the land. Relying heavily on English precedent in Carolina, Governor Bienville repeatedly sought authority to trade Indian slaves for Negroes in the islands. He recommended an exchange rate of three Indians for each Negro. In 1710 the minister of

marine and colonies officially prohibited such trade, considering it «not practicable,» and stating «it may be possible» to «induce French vessels» to import Negroes from Africa once war ended in Europe. Meanwhile a few well-to-do settlers bargained with Santo Domingo merchants for black servants. Bienville sent a brigantine to Havana in 1707 to meet Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, his brother and founder of French Louisiana, who intended to sell some Negroes captured from English Caribbean plantations. Iberville's death in the Nevis campaign, however, made it a «fruitless» voyage. With only about twenty Negro slaves in 1712, colonists expressed willingness to receive pirates who could procure Negroes. The black slaves who reached Louisiana before 1719 were profitably employed at necessary jobs. In 1720 Bienville traded Laurent, one of these early Louisiana Negroes, to the company for three recently imported Africans. The company desperately needed a good, but cheap, blacksmith at Mobile.[3]

Without sufficient finances and without voluntary laborers, the colony needed to employ slaves at various tasks. In 1717 Commissary-General Hubert urged that Negroes be used to «drive carts loaded with the King's goods» and be taught «the different trades of the workmen maintained by the King.» Diverse and specialized slave labor would save wages and reduce costly food consumption. French permanence on the Gulf of Mexico depended largely on the colony's ability to replace expensive and inefficient white workers with unsalaried and coercible black workers. Blacks, forced to toil on a strange continent, applied this white need to their own survival and self-defense. Whites simultaneously applied black labor to their own wealth and esteem. Within a decade these economic, social, and psychological links between labor exploitation and racial subjugation forged an inseparable chain around colonial Louisiana.[4]

As the first cargo of Africans disembarked on the sandy, uncleared Gulf islets, the weak French garrison was engaged in a struggle against the nearby Spanish outpost at Pensacola. After several months of cruel imprisonment and confinement, these captives were thrust amidst a European colonial war. A group of Negroes immediately began to work on fortifications at Pensacola. The rest went to Dauphin Island to assist with its evacuation. Sixty Negroes remained with 250 soldiers to defend the island. Early in August Joseph Le Moyne Sérigny, commander of the campaign, learned «through fugitive slaves» that French soldiers deserted Pensacola, which was subsequently recaptured by the Spanish. On returning to Dauphin Island, he discovered the soldiers' barracks «burned to the ground as a result of sabotage.» Once the Spanish assault ended, the Council of Commerce reported losses incurred by several runaway slaves. Deserting soldiers and Negroes were ubiquitous problems for frontier authorities in colonial America. The situation was aggravated in Louisiana by the proximity of Spanish refuge at Pensacola.[5]

While colonial officials formulated means of compensating losses caused by runaway slaves, over a thousand Africans «were dying of hunger and wretchedness on the sands of Fort St. Louis.» Freighters left for Vera Cruz and the West Indies in search of wheat needed to feed starving survivors of the Atlantic crossing. The *Affriquain* left Juida with 280 slaves; only 180 of these persons were alive when the ship reached Dauphin Island on March 17, 1721. The *Duc de Maine* and the *Néreide* each lost 56 slaves. The entire human cargo on the *Charles* perished when it burned more than fifty leagues from the coast. The few surviving crew members

> «suffered greatly from thirst and hunger, having been reduced to

> loading their launch with a few negroes for their subsistence.»

Under such hapless circumstances, Africans' dread of European cannibalism was realized. Meanwhile colonists failed to manage the subsistence of 2,000 slaves arriving at Louisiana between June 1719 and October 1721. The census of November 1721 records only 680 African survivors.

With the arrival of African slaves, colonists were prepared to move their settlement from the barren gulf coast to the fertile valley of the Mississippi River. The new Company of the Indies distributed land concessions from the mouth of the river to the Indian village of Natchez. Prospective planters, however, faced prolonged inundations of the river, pestilent swamps, and dense forests. Bienville selected the site of New Orleans as the capital for its strategic location, certainly not for its terrain and environment. While some slaves were transported to company mines at Illinois or sold to local concessionaires, most Africans who escaped death on Dauphin Island were employed at making New Orleans a habitable city. Some built levees and drainage ditches along the river. Others cleared the forests and prepared timber for vessels and houses. Swarms of alligators and mosquitoes, creatures familiar to Africans, kept the French away from the city during this preliminary labor. Within a year of African migration to New Orleans, black slaves were planting and preparing corn, beans, and rice for the subsistence of themselves and their masters.[7]

Two concessions at Natchez, situated about 200 miles above New Orleans, began to successfully plant tobacco. Father Pierre de Charlevoix, a Jesuit priest descending the Mississippi in 1721, described Natchez as the «finest, most fertile, and most populous canton of all Louisiana.» Free from the river's inundations and abundant in open land and clear streams, this enclave of the Natchez Indians was long considered the best site for plantation agriculture. Charlevoix reported the concessions there wanting «nothing to make an improvement of the land but negroes, or hired servants.» He advised against the former because they

> «are always strangers: and who can be assured that by continually increasing in our colonies, they will not one day become formidable enemies?»

Despite the indifferent traveler's foreboding, settlers hurried thirty black slaves to the St. Catherine concession. White tobacco workers were returning to France.[8]

On July 18, 1721, the director of St. Catherine, Jean-Baptiste Faucon-Dumanoir, wrote from Natchez:

> «You may be assured, gentlemen, that tobacco, rice, and silk will thrive in this colony as well as in any spot on earth, but remember that without a great many negroes you cannot expect any profit, since the white laborers can barely feed themselves.»

Faucon-Dumanoir assured company officials that «indigo will grow well here provided a man of experience should be engaged for this culture.» He also needed skilled workers, especially locksmiths, edge-tool makers, and sawyers,

> «to teach their trade to the negroes, for if we succeed in training and perfecting them, they will, in the course of time, bring you large profits; if necessary, they will be

> sold at four times their cost and in case of need, their labor would bring more than what we gain on our culture.»[9]

Throughout the colony European contract farmers and workers were leaving because of inhospitable surroundings and insufficient salaries. Returns on the company's large investment increasingly depended on its ability to import large numbers of African slaves. Negroes' subsistence could easily be provided for with Indian corn and beans. The abundance of rice already cultivated by blacks would sufficiently pay for newly imported slaves. By 1726, most slaves were arriving from the Senegal region. These West Africans were quite familiar with geographical conditions similar to those along the Mississippi. On his voyages up the Senegal River between 1697 and 1715, André Brüe observed that its inundations contributed greatly to the «rich and fruitful» soil which «abounds in maiz of both kinds; rice, pulse, tobacco, and indigo.» The agricultural experience of Senegalese slaves provided an early source of wealth for French settlers. Small planters reportedly purchased a few slaves and grew rice on uncleared patches of land within the bounds of large concessions. Disgruntled concessionaires, having to employ their slaves at larger tasks of constructing levees and ditches, were then forced to buy rice from these small slaveholding trespassers.[10]

Louisiana colonists were long denied the quantity of slaves necessary for producing rice, indigo, or tobacco as staples. Throughout the 1720s they demanded more and more Africans. Some well-financed concessions, however, managed to accumulate enough slaves for intensive agricultural production. The St. Catherine and White Earth plantations at Natchez produced exportable tobacco through Negro labor until the Indians destroyed them in 1729. The Natchez War, in fact, upset the company's plans to establish a tobacco factory there with thirty black workers. Five concessions at Chapitoulas, just three leagues above New Orleans, maintained 315 Negro adults and 126 Negro children by 1731. Through the labor of these people, a white population of 53 established profitable indigo factories.[11]

The settlement with the densest black population stood across the river from Chapitoulas. Here 940 Negro adults and 280 Negro children were distributed among 54 landholdings and 2 mills along the river.Three free Negroes also lived in the area, alongside 206 white masters, 31 *engagés*, and 7 Indian slaves. In the middle of these concessions stood the colony's largest plantation; its 201 Negro adults and 29 Negro children were owned by the Compagnie des Indes and directed by Le Page du Pratz. Under Le Page's scrutiny these slaves cultivated the colony's best tobacco and cotton.[12]

During the 1720s most Negroes performed agricultural labor between New Orleans and Natchez, and a growing black population began to concentrate within this 200-mile stretch of alluvial soil along the Mississippi. Slaves left on the gulf coast were generally employed at manufacturing timber products, one of the most lucrative staples during the colony's early development. When not producing food products in the winter months, Negroes made «all sorts of timber,» stave-wood, shingles, planks, beams, and planking, for commerce with Santo Domingo. At Mobile company Negroes went into the cypress swamps to cut wood, with which Dubreuil's Negroes made shingles. The dangers encountered by slaves in swamps infested with alligators and mosquitoes perhaps proved too expensive for private slaveholders.[13]

The abundance of decayed and fallen pine trees along the Gulf of Mexico made pitch

and tar manufacture a profitable industry in colonial Louisiana. In 1723 Widow Belsaguy, a manufacturer at Mobile, requested four Negroes to «teach them the trade and in three years she will make them perfect.» Governor De La Chaise supported her request «because she would be responsible for the negroes in case of [their] death before the end of the three years.» By 1726, black apprentices were replacing white coopers, «whose food and wages carry off all the protits.» The elaborate process of tar manufacture operated by Louisiana Negroes during the 1720s merits the description provided by Le Page:

> When they have a sufficient number of these trees, that are fit for the purpose, they saw them in cuts with a cross-cut saw, about two feet in length; and while the slaves are employed in sawing them, others split these cuts lengthwise into small pieces, the smaller the better. They sometimes spend three or four months in cutting and preparing the trees in this manner. In the mean time they make a square hollow in the ground, four or five feet broad, and five or six inches deep: from one side of which goes off a canal or gutter, which discharges itself into a large and pretty deep pit, at the distance of a few paces. From this pit proceeds another canal, which communicates with a second pit; and even from the first square you make three or four such trenches, which discharge themselves into as many pits, according to the quantity of wood you have, or the quantity of tar you imagine you may draw from it. Then you lay over the square hole four or five pretty strong bars of iron, and upon these bars you arrange cross-wise the split pieces of pine, of which you should have a quantity ready; laying them so, that there may be a little air between them. In this manner you raise a large and high pyramid of the wood, and when it is finished, you set fire to it at the top. As the wood burns, the fire melts the resin in the pine, and this liquid tar distills into the square hole, and from thence runs into the pits made to receive it.[14]

The Superior Council, Louisiana's judicial and military oligarchy, relied on two sources of black labor for construction of New Orleans. Since the company owned all imported Africans, it was entitled to their labor until auction time. Of the 88 slaves who survived the 1723 voyage from Gorée Castle on the Senegal coast, 50 worked on the levee, 35 built huts on the company's plantation, and 3 became sailors. Negroes intended for sale to Spanish merchants also temporarily worked in New Orleans. In November, 1727, the council decided to maintain Africans already granted to inhabitants until the levee was finished. A statute labor law provided the other means of completing the capital. Inhabitants were required to supply Negro labor squads for thirty days of public works. While grantees and officials argued over who should fee them, these blacks

> «cut down the trees at the two ends of the town as far as Bayou St.John in order to clear this ground and to give air to the city and to the mill.»

They also dug canals and entrenchments for both cultivation and defense.[15]

While Frenchmen demanded more slaves for their own prosperity and colony's development, the mortality of human deprivation and emigration took its toll on enslaved Africans.

Senegalese captives who eventually reached Louisiana in the late 1720s were kept for months in slave prisons at Gorée, where they «had only one meal per day and drank brackish water.» Between June, 1728, and June, 1729, three slavers embarked from Gorée with 1,287 slaves. Most of the 1,051 survivors who reached the Mississippi River were attacked by scurvy immediately after disembarkation. Unable to hospitalize the hundreds of sick, colonial officials sold them at auction. Their dire need for slaves led settlers to «outbid each other for the scurvied, consumptive and ulcerated» Negroes, raising the price for them as high as 1,000 *livres*.[16]

The fate of the *Venus*'s cargo tragically reveals the vicious cycle of human desolation and economic desperation involved in the Atlantic slave trade. Eighty-seven Africans died in passage; 43 died on arrival. Two-thirds of the remaining disease-ridden people died almost immediately after auction. Approximately 7,000 Africans reached Louisiana between 1718 and 1735. The black population in 1735 was only 3,400.[17]

As loss of African lives and colonial property continued, a few French surgeons profited from periodic visits and inadequate remedies. The company's plantation was fortunate enough to have an African physician, who taught Le Page his secret cures for yaws and scurvy. For yaws he prescribed an ointment consisting of powdered iron rust and citron juice and warned against the mercurial medicine used by surgeons, which proved fatal to their patients. He applied an ointment made from scurvy grass, ground-ivy, and water-cresses to the infected gums of scurvied victims.

> «The negro who taught me these remedies, observing the great care I took of both the negro men and negro women, taught me likewise the cure of all the distempers to which the women are subject; for the negro women are as liable to diseases as the white women.»[18]

The importation of African slaves was extremely fatal, but much more frequent than European immigration. Decreasing availability of white workers combined with increasing profitability of black labor to escalate the apprenticeship of slaves to reliable skilled artisans. Consequently many newly arrived Africans immediately entered a separate and diverse class of black artisanship. For Senegalese farmers this must have been an especially dramatic experience; in Senegambia occupational people such as blacksmiths and leather workers belonged to an endogamous social caste, or nẽno, distinct from free men and bondsmen. Throughout the first decade of Louisiana slavery, Africans with strong agricultural and communal traditions suddenly found themselves performing highly individualized tasks.[19]

Company and privately owned slaves were apprenticed to brickmakers, joiners, blacksmiths, locksmiths, sculptors, wheelwrights, saddlers, masons, and carpenters. Contracts provided that «after three years they would have them fully trained,» usually within three years, artisans would receive between 200 and 400 *francs* per slave. Governor Périer suggested that the company train Negroes at different trades in Paris. Although this policy was not enacted, the directors encouraged the apprenticeship of «some already in the colony.» «Those people once trained» would cost the company nothing. By the end of 1728, Périer confidently reported:

> «We are placing negroes as apprentices with all the workmen who we think are good and honest men, and

> if the same practice had been followed when they were first sent to the colony, we could at present do without several white men, although the workmen do not seek to perfect the negroes in their trades because they feel distinctly that that will harm them in the future.»

Immediate needs did not preclude anxiety over the potential economic and social dangers posed by black artisans.[20]

Skilled black workers became a significant factor in the growth of colonial cities. The census of 1732 indicates that 15 out of 59 New Orleans tradesmen and merchants owned Negroes, whom they housed and trained in their shops. Thirty-seven of the 252 Negroes then residing in the city belonged to skilled white craftsmen. Carpenters, joiners, and blacksmiths owned more Negro slaves than other artisans, but blacks worked at a variety of specialties ranging from hospital service to ironworking. Occupational and personal proximity of these Negroes with white inhabitants invited interracial mixture and emancipation. Well into the nineteenth century, a growing class of free blacks and mulattoes and an expanding group of black artisans contributed profoundly to the economic welfare, as well as the cultural wealth, of New Orleans.[21]

Since Iberville landed on the Gulf Coast in 1699, deserting soldiers and sailors plagued the French colony. The reliability of these people not having improved by 1723, Governor De La Chaise urged that the company employ black sailors.

> «It would be better for you to have negroes to serve as sailors than your convicts and your white men who must have French provisions. The two negroes of Suratte whom we brought here in the *Galatée* are now good sailors, so when some come, give orders, Gentlemen, that those who you think suitable be retained in order to make sailors of them.»

In May 1724, Antoine Beauvais, a free mulatto cooper whose sight was impaired, requested to «serve the company as a sailor.» The Superior Council granted Antoine the job for fifteen *livres* per month with rations. The Council's March 25, 1729, report of the navy included: «We are putting as many blacks as we can in the place of the white men.»[22]

Shifting sand bars, shallow channels, and the buildup of trees carried by the river created peculiar problems for navigators at the Mississippi mouth. The black rowers manning the boats that guided vessels through the ticklish delta were as important as a good pilot. In 1727, fifty-five company Negroes resided at Fort Balise. When not meeting ships they removed the large quantities of timber that continuously blocked passage. The company daily diminished naval expenses by «making only blacks, and few white men, sailors.»[23]

After 1723 most Louisiana slaves came from the Senegal region, where Africans already experienced naval and military employment by a white ruling minority. Colonial development on the Mississippi coincided with commercial development on the Senegal. Blacks played vital roles in both processes, from positions of strength in Africa and weakness in America. The use of African sailors in Louisiana reveals how the situation of French colonists on the Mississippi resembled that of French merchants on the Senegal. Both groups were comprised of people scattered along troublesome rivers and dependent upon the same central authority in Paris. The Compagnie des Indes employed European criminals and forced workers as soldiers in both West

Africa and America. But geographical factors necessitated multifunctional and intensive labor, for which Europeans turned to Africans.[24]

Frenchmen on the Senegal employed four major occupational groups of Africans: interpreters, domestic servants, sailors, and bambaras – people enslaved from the interior region and stationed as soldiers at forts and factories. During the 1720s the term bambara had several meanings. The Bambaras were an ethnic group comprising the dominant people of the emerging Segu and Kaarta kingdoms. Victims of Bambara wars, enslaved and transported westward, were also classified as Bambara slaves. The French used the term bambara for any Senegalese slave soldier. Most Senegalese slaves who reached Louisiana between 1723 and 1730 were evidently captured Bambaras. André Brüe described the French slave trade in 1722:

> «It is allowed, that this trade with the Mandigos can supply the Company with no slaves, but Bambaras Negroes. But then these Negroes are the best in all Africa for work, being strong, gentle, tractable, and faithful; not subject to sullenness, or to run away as the Guinea Negroes frequently are.»

Owners of Bambara slaves in Louisiana would have questioned Brüe's assessment of their character.[25]

At the time of Brüe's report, a Bambara named Samba led a revolt against the French at Fort Arguin. The Dutch subsequently captured the fort and held it for two years. On recovering Fort Arguin for France in 1724, Périer de Salvert condemned Samba to slavery in America. During passage to Louisiana, he plotted mutiny, but was discovered and enchained. Starting life anew as a company slave in the colony, Samba served as interpreter for slave cases before the Superior Council. He also became commander of the company's Negroes and confidant of director Le Page du Pratz. Samba's constructive involvement in colonial affairs ended in 1730 when he conspired to revolt. His experience in service and insurrection was emblematic of slavery's dilemma for both white and black Louisianians.[26]

Demographic, economic, and geographical conditions in Louisiana made slaveholders' needs, demands, and power as uncertain and flexible as the Mississippi delta. Slaves were involved more actively in the evolution of its economy and social structure than is assumed. The *Code Noir*, which is often overemphasized, provided a weak framework for people unfamiliar with Africans and inexperienced with slavery. This code, which originated in France and reached Louisiana through the Caribbean islands in 1724, imposed restrictions on slaves and free negroes and responsibilities on slaveholders. Frontier conditions and economic interests, however, militated against the social order that it was supposed to shape from slavery. It was almost impossible to promote religious instruction, sexual separation, and kind treatment along the damp, mosquito-infested banks of the Mississippi.[27]

Father Raphael, a Capuchin priest, reported that

> «even in the most populated places the instruction of the negro and Indian slaves is entirely neglected since the masters think only of deriving profit from the work of these poor wretches . . . The majority die without baptism, . . . although the negroes ask for nothing better than

to be instructed and baptized . . .»

Raphael was encouraged by the peculiar «religious pliability» of Africans and infuriated by the «lack of religion on the part of their masters.» He urged

> «that the ordinances of the black code against masters who abuse their slaves and make them work on Sundays and feast days will be put in force, for although the number of those who maintain young Indian women or negresses to satisfy their intemperance is considerably diminished, there still remain enough to scandalize the church and to require an effective remedy.»[28]

The Superior Council heard several cases of slave overwork and mutilation. Captain de Merveilleux petitioned against his overseer in September, 1727, for ruining one of his most valuable slaves. Choucoura, an arrested runaway, was apparently bound tightly by his hands and given 600 rawhide lashes by Jean Gaulaz. Through this «inhuman punishment» he lost two fingers from his right hand and two finger tips from his left hand. Another «brutish overseer» was charged with raping and beating slave women in the open field, stinting slaves of their necessary provisions, and «causing frequent abortion among the slave women by corporal punishment in pregnancy.»[29]

While the black code provided a legal channel for emancipation, the scarcity of white women amidst a growing black population created the real conditions for a rising free Negro class. French colonists immediately recognized the need to both limit and utilize the middling position of these people. The first free Negro mentioned in colonial records was Louis Congo, who became the colony's executioner «as the price of his freedom.» When a company slave named Johnny had been assigned this job, he ran to his cabin and cut off his hand with an axe. For this show of courage, he was made commander of the company's Negroes. Louis Congo's first victim was a Negro, «burned alive for killing a Frenchman.» In August, 1726, «three runaway savages» murderously attacked the black executioner. The employment of free Negroes to capture runaway slaves also promoted control over slavery. But as demonstrated in one case before the Superior Council, intraracial hostility was not ensured. André, a free Negro, was imprisoned for shooting into the water and allowing a fugitive Negro to disappear.[30]

Despite the black code, John Mingo, a free English-speaking Negro from Carolina, married a slave named Thérèse. His contract with her owner provided that he «pay as much as possible each year» to redeem her value of 1500 *francs*. Thérèse was allowed a ration of rice, corn, beans, and sweet potatoes from the plantation, and her «children, if any be born meanwhile, shall also be free.» Two years later on October 21, 1729, the couple hired themselves to De Chavannes, Thérèse as a domestic servant and John as overseer of his slaves. Free Negroes could petition and testify in court. But they could be reduced to slavery for immoral conduct or inability to pay fines and debts.[31]

The black code especially broke down in New Orleans, where slaves freely roamed the streets and traversed legal barriers. To save on food costs, masters allowed blacks to work for non-slaveholders on Saturdays and Sundays. Negroes living around the capital «generally turned their two hours at noon to account by making faggots to sell in the city.» Many black residents sold ashes or fruits. With money so earned some Negroes purchased their freedom or enjoyed French luxuries.

Prohibition against sexual promiscuity was as ineffective as that against economic independence. The census of New Orleans for 1732 lists 229 white «men capable of bearing arms» and 169 white «women and marriageable girls,» a disproportionate sex ratio worsened by an incessant transient male population. The city's black population consisted of 102 «negroes» and 74 «negresses,» whose distribution was determined by their owners. Black marketing and miscegenation made New Orleans a seedbed for free men and women of color.[32]

Although the black code forbade slaves of different masters from assembling by day or night, blacks managed to gather regularly in large numbers. The labor statute for public works brought slaves from all along the river into New Orleans for periods of thirty days. Common work projects and close physical contact created opportunity for developing communication and communal identity. New Orleans, with its black artisan population, free negro class, and statute slave laborers greatly enhanced the emergence of a creole culture and language. On Sundays Negroes came «together to the number of three or four hundred» and made their own kind of Sabbath. According to Le Page they sold stolen goods to each other and committed many crimes at these «tumultuous meetings» of song and dance. Outside the town's rear gate African slaves – agricultural laborers, construction workers, skilled artisans, sailors, and even maroons – could meet for ceremony and conspiracy.[33]

Many slaves, driven by despair over permanent captivity or periodic cruelty, often fled alone into the wilderness. Others resolutely sought their African homeland or Spanish refuge. Amidst the confusion and turmoil of the Pensacola war, several of the first Africans to reach the colony swam from Dauphin Island. Some, perhaps, reached the mainland and found refuge among the Spanish. European explorers long before realized the significant role that African slaves might play in their struggle for supremacy in America. In his 1678 *Memoir on the Necessity of Fitting out an Expedition to take Possession of Louisiana*, Robert Cavelier de la Salle proposed that «Mulattoes, Indians, and Negroes,» once promised their liberty, would assist the French in driving their Spanish masters from Mexico. He also suggested their role in defending a colony.

> «Indians, Mulattoes, and Negroes, armed and freed by this first success fom the terror which they have of the Spaniards, would be able to dispute the advance of the largest army which could be raised in Mexico. Besides which, they would stake all, in order not to be again reduced to a state of slavery.»

Now with a Spanish fort so near at Pensacola, the envisioned colony of La Salle had to secure its own slaves from enemy interference.[34]

The colonial frontier posed a peculiar dilemma for Negro slaves. Runaway Africans, in a foreign and hostile country, often had to choose among different nations of slaveholders, including Indians. Confined on an increasingly slaveholding continent, the black maroon found freedom only in the uninhabited or uninhabitable wilderness. In 1720 «a young negro about twenty,» belonging to Le Page, ran away with his wife into the woods, «where his youth and want of experience made him believe he might live without the toils of slavery.» This marooned African couple were members of the first human cargo that reached Louisiana. Le Page had purchased both for 1,320 *livres*, or 55£ sterling, and taken them to Natchez. On being found by the Tonica Indians,

they were carried to a village and given to a Frenchman, for whom they subsequently worked. The young man «died of a defluxion on the breast» after being returned to his rightful owner.[35]

Some cases of runaway slaves were obviously explicable. A Negro woman bought by a government official in New Orleans «went mad, and subsequently ran off to the bush, never to come again.» David, of the Bambara nation, ran away «because his master broke a finger for him.» He killed a heifer in complicity with some other Bambaras, who fled from Adrien Gilbert «because underfed.» Another Bambara named Pierot, aged 27 or 28, ran away from Jean Dalby «because [he was] too sick and afraid of punishment.» African maroons travelling eastward along the Gulf Coast, either seeking Spanish Pensacola or Africa, were frequently recovered at Mobile. Le Page explained that some Negroes «have killed or drowned themselves» and several «have deserted,» all «from an apprehension that the white men were going to drink their blood.»[36]

The anxiety of both races concerning slave maroonage is clearly illustrated in the case of Biron, a Bambara who arrived on the *Aurore* in 1726. Biron ran away several times within two years. On July 7, 1728 he «absented himself» once again and was pursued by his master, Jean Soubagne. When Soubagne found him «sitting amidst the cane» outside New Orleans, Biron «fled into the depth of the woods.» While being enchained after capture, he jumped on Soubagne's gun «and made himself master of it.» Soubagne managed to seize Biron «whilst awaiting help from the other negroes, and took the gun away from him for fear that he might fire on him . . .»[37]

The attorney general of the Superior Council charged Biron with

> «rebellion against his master, all the more punishable from the fact that the number of negroes is increasing in this colony, and that one would not be in safety on the distant plantations, that this negro is now a prisoner.»

Not speaking French, Biron was interrogated through Samba, the Bambara rebel and mutineer who was now a Christian and sworn to translate faithfully. According to Samba, Biron

> «said that his master might fire at him, that it was not in the intention of using it against his master and that when he seized the gun it was broken.»

The Council convicted Biron for running away and ordered that he

> «be whipped by the public executioner at the foot of the gallows, warning him moreover, not to run away in future under penalty of much greater penalties.»[38]

The punishment of runaway slaves reflected both the frequency of black maroonage and the intensity of white fear. M. Dumont described the formula:

> When a negro maroons, that is, runs away, he is flogged when taken . . . He is laid flat on his face on the ground, his two legs kept together, and his arms extended and tied to two stakes so that he forms a letter Y. In this state he receives a hundred or sometimes two hundred blows of a carter's whip. While this is going on, a lighted brand must be kept ready to apply to his face when he does not cry; for it often

> happens that in their rage at the punishment, negroes have choked themselves by thrusting their tongue over their palate and actually sucking it in. When their skin is thus in shreds, it is rubbed with a sponge dipped in pepper and vinegar . . . After this punishment they are put in irons and kept fasting until they promise to behave better.[39]

Maroon communities constituted slavery's greatest threat to Louisiana during the 1720s. These elusive villages provided runaway slaves with their most effective means of physical survival and political resistance. They significantly resembled Bambara banditry along the Senegal River, in both practice and population. During the Bambara wars, when political authority weakened, men from a single village or group of nearby villages secretly formed an association called tõ. These bandits, or tegereya, would disappear into the bush, make quick raids on unsuspecting neighbors, and sell their plunder away from home. In Louisiana the unsuspecting neighbors were French planters, and the plunder was generally livestock. On August 17, 1726, Attorney General Fleuriau, owner of eight Negroes, exhorted

> «prompt and sweeping action against runaway slaves, lest soon the community be raided by whole gangs thereof. Let the neighborhood *Indians* watch out for such runaways and arrest them. Find the ringleaders and deal with them stringently.»[40]

Coalescence of Negro and Indian runaway slaves seriously endangered a colony surrounded by various Indian nations. Sansoucy, an Indian slave, «took refuge in a village called *des Natanapallé* where there were fifteen other fugitive slaves.» Possessing eleven guns and some ammunition, these maroons «meant to defend themselves if molested for capture.» Godin of the Oquelonex tribe, a young man belonging to company cashier Duval, «ran away by mad impulse with slaves of Sieur Tisserant.» Beyond Lake Pontchartrain he joined a party of other fugitives, whose chief also belonged to Tisserant, and lived there for two years. Governor Périer argued against continuing the traffic of Indian slaves in May, 1728.

> «. . . these Indian slaves being mixed with our negroes may induce them to desert with them, as has already happened, as they may maintain relations with them which might be disastrous to the colony when there are more blacks.»[41]

Maroon communities served as economic markets, as well as places of refuge. Slave pilferage continuously troubled colonists, who had to keep constant vigilance over their livestock. While working on the levee in 1727, five Negroes killed two cows and ran away from New Orleans. Between Chapitoulas and New Orleans about five Bambara fugitives, all aged in their twenties and belonging to different concessions, stole a heifer, bacon, corn, and some hens. Changereau was captured and admitted to eating some of the meat, but denied stealing it. He attributed the heifer's theft to Doctor Manadé's runaway Negro. François, belonging to St. Julien across the river, took no part in killing any cattle, but «stole some bacon and sold it to another negro for tobacco.» Sabany, a Bambara slave of Villainville's New Orleans concession, denied having run away. But some marooned comrades gave him fresh meat in a cabin at Bienville's concession, which stood on the opposite bank of the Mississippi.[42]

The French relied heavily on local Indian nations for restitution of marooned Africans. The majority of runaways convicted by the Superior Council were captured by Indians, who received weapons, ammunition, and alcohol as bounty. The employment of Indian slave catchers served a dual purpose for white masters: it created an effective deterrent against costly maroonage and promoted hostility between the two most populous races. The presence of a single Negro among a neighboring village caused alarm among the small French population. Bienville made peace with the Natchez in 1723 on condition

> «that they bring dead or alive a negro who has taken refuge among them for a long time and makes them seditious speeches against the French nation and who has followed them on occasions against our Indian allies.»

Dumont described this Negro as a free black who went over to the Indians, and «even made himself head of a party. It was justly feared that he would teach them our way of attack and defense.» The Natchez chief, Tattooed Serpent, turned over his head and the heads of some hostile warriors for ten bottles of brandy.[43]

Colonists' dread of Indian-Negro cooperation and their dependence on each race for vital needs placed them in a difficult bind; one that could only be escaped by eliminating the least needed people. This dilemma for French colonists in Louisiana became a great danger during the Natchez War of 1729-1730. Before making their deadly assault on the colony's most advanced settlement, the Natchez Indians convinced several Negroes, including two foremen of the White Earth plantation, that they would be free with them. Despite warnings, which even caused settlers to arm their slaves, the Natchez settlement was taken by surprise when a friendly visit became a bloody massacre. The Indians killed the men and captured their women and children as slaves. The 280 black slaves now found themselves in a state of quasi-freedom, caught in a struggle among Natchez warriors, French soldiers, and Choctaw mercenaries.[44]

News of the Natchez massacre set off a wave of fear at New Orleans. Governor Périer struggled to mobilize a military expedition among people who were even frightened of the Chaouchas, a nation of thirty warriors below New Orleans. To both ease white anxiety and secure Negro-Indian antagonism, Périer sent Negro volunteers to destroy the Chaouchas. The example of this mission, «which they executed with as much promptness as secrecy,» kept the other small nations along the river «in a respectful attitude.»

> «If I had been willing to use our negro volunteers I should have destroyed all these little nations which are of no use to us, and which might on the contrary cause our negroes to revolt . . .»

But the use of a much needed, but much-to-be-feared, black soldiers demanded careful consideration. Like all colonial officers in America, Périer dared not use all Negro volunteers to destroy Indian nations

> «for fear of rendering [them] . . . too bold and of inclining them perhaps to revolt after the example of those who joined the Natchez.»[45]

On January 27, 1730, a force of colonial soldiers, including fifteen black volunteers and nearly 500 Choctaw allies, caught the Natchez by surprise. They reportedly killed about a hundred Indians and recovered 54

women and children and 100 Negroes. But as Périer learned on January 31,

> «this defeat would have been complete if it had not been for the negroes who prevented the Choctaws from carrying off the powder and who by their resistance had given the Natchez time to enter the two forts.»

Once inside the forts Negroes assisted the Natchez in their use of French cannons. After two weeks the assault at Natchez ended when the Indians escaped their forts and fled westward. Many recovered Negroes were now in the hands of the Choctaws, who refused to release them without sufficient reward. The scattering of these black captives among Choctaw villages added fuel to the mounting fires of racial anxiety and national hostility. Afraid that these slaves would either settle with the Choctaws or be sold to the English, Louisiana officials immediately negotiated for their restitution. Meanwhile they abandoned to the Choctaws «three Negroes who had been most unruly, and who had taken the most active part in behalf of the *Natchez*.» These black rebels were then

> «burned alive with a degree of cruelty which has inspired all the Negroes with a new horror of the Savages, but which will have a beneficial effect in securing the safety of the Colony.»[46]

To those Negroes who «proved loyally useful» to the French at Natchez and the Illinois post, officials had promised their freedom. On May 13, 1730, Attorney General Fleuriau ordered that the promise be fulfilled. He also suggested that a «military company organized among the like elect negroes» be organized for «instant call against the Indians on occasion.» A free black militia was subsequently formed and actively participated in war against the Chickasaws during the 1730s. A despondent Governor Périer offered a revealing assessment of the Natchez conflict:

> «The Negroes to the number of fifteen who were permitted to take arms did deeds of surprising valor. If these soldiers had not been so expensive and so necessary to the colony it would have been safer to use them than ours who seem expressly made for Louisiana, they are so bad.»[47]

Louisiana's first great racial crisis culminated in New Orleans. While waiting for reinforcements from France, colonists spent a dreadful summer in 1730. Repeated rumors of Indian invasion maintained a state of white alarm and created opportune conditions for black conspiracy. On «receiving a violent blow from a French soldier for refusing to obey him,» a Negro woman passionately proclaimed «that the French should not long insult negroes.» That evening a suspicious Le Page du Pratz skulked about the company's slave quarters. From one of the huts, he heard some Negroes scheming

> «a design to rid themselves of all the French at once, and to settle in their room, by making themselves masters of the capitol, and all the property of the French.»

Samba, the trusted overseer and interpreter for the Compagnie des Indes, was among the eight Negroes who headed the conspiracy.[48]

Subjected to the torture of burning matches, the conspirators refused to confess. On discovering Samba's insurrectionary experience in West Africa and on the Atlantic

Ocean, Le Page drew up a memorial describing his seditious past. This evidence before the council and further threats of torture compelled Samba to «directly own all the circumstances of the conspiracy.» After the others confessed

> «the eight negroes were condemned to be broke alive on the wheel, and the woman to be hanged before their eyes; which was accordingly done, and prevented the conspiracy from taking effect.»

The conspirators' heads were posted at both ends of New Orleans and at Chapitoulas, where the black population was most dense and white anxiety most intense.[49]

The 1730 slave conspiracy awakened white colonists to the delicate balance that had to be maintained between the services and threats offered by the black population. Forebodings of disaster demanded restrictions on already developing social realities such as arming blacks and allowing them to assemble. The conspiracy warned Negroes, on the other hand, of their distressing position in a society based on racial slavery. Resistance against slavery weakened economic self-defense and advancement as effective means of transcending slavery. The effectiveness of these means and the consequent diversity within the black population, both in function and color, militated against the success of overt resistance. Incongruous response patterns enhanced incompatible black interests.

By January, 1731, when the Compagnie des Indes resigned its Louisiana monopoly, the population of the Lower Mississippi consisted of 1,721 European settlers and 3,600 African slaves. The difficult task of providing a slowly developing colony with a desired and dreaded black labor force now fell upon the French government. As the importation of Africans diminished during the following decade, colonists needed to both consolidate and control black slaves. Certain demographic and economic conditions, especially a lack of white women, artisans, and soldiers, contributed to the peculiar emergence of a free Negro population and a regular militia of Negro troops. But the overwhelming scarcity of black laborers in Louisiana created a pattern of race relations largely resembling slavery in other North American colonies.[50]

The French forcibly removed Negroes from their African homeland onto an American frontier, but not without paying a great price. With agricultural and skilled labor needed for colonial development came an oppressed and discontented people who threatened colonial order. By 1731 French colonists' increasing dependence on enslaved Africans prescribed strict limitations on the role and status of that allegedly inferior race. Within this tightening polarity of value and danger, displaced and diverse Afri s created an autonomous and antagonist community.

Notes

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2. *MPA*, II, 82, 101-102, 111, 178; Elizabeth Donnan ed., *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America* (Washington, D.C., 1935), IV, 635-638. For African contribution to rice cultivation in South Carolina, see: Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York, 1974), pp. 58-62.

3. *MPA*, II, 20-29, 73, III, 40, 141, 282; Nancy Miller Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisiana During the French Regime, 1699-1763* (New York, 1916), pp. 228-229.

4. *MPA*, II, 230.

5. Glenn R. Conrad, trans., ed., annot., *Immigration and War Louisiana, 1718-1721*, U. S. L. History Series (Lafayette, 1970), pp. 21-27; Joan Cain and Virginia Koenig, trans., *Historical Journal of the Settlement of the French in Louisiana,* attributed to Jean-Baptiste Bénard de La Harpe, U. S. L. History Series (Lafayette, 1971), p. 115; *MPA*, II, 216, III, 255.

6. La Harpe, *Journal*, 167-169, 190; Maduell, *Census Tables,* p. 21.

7. *MPA*, II, 310; Baron Marc de Villiers, « A History of the Foundation of New Orleans, 1717-1722,» *Louisiana Historical Quarterly,* III (1920), 195, hereafter cited as *LHQ*, with volume and page number.

8. B. F. French, ed., «Historical Journal of Father Pierre François Xavier de Charlevoix,» *Historical Collections of Louisiana*, 7 vols. (New York, 1846-51), III, 140-141, 154-156, 159.

9. «Excerpt from a letter written by Mr. Faucond du Manoir, Director General of the Colony of Ste Catherine, July 13, 1721,» *LHQ*, II (1919), 164-169.

10. *MPA*, II, 321, 351, 629-630, III, 423, 447, 519; Thomas Astley, *A New General Collection of Voyages and Travels* (London, 1745-47), II, 49; Philip Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade* (Madison, 1975), p. 17; Surrey, *Commerce,* p. 232.

11. *MPA*, I, 80, II, 396-399, 629-630; «Letter from Father du Poisson, Oct. 3, 1727,» Reuben Gold Thwaites (ed.), *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791,* 73 vols. (Cleveland, 1900), LXVII, 281, 311; *Census Tables,* 116.

12. *Census Tables*, pp. 121-122; Le Page du Pratz, *The History of Louisiana* (1763), facsimile reproduction of 1774 English edition, Joseph Tregle, Jr., ed., Louisiana American Revolution Bicentennial Commission Publication (Baton Rouge, 1975), pp. 193-195.

13. *MPA*, II, 393, 494, III, 521; Thomas Hutchins, *An Historical Narrative and Topographical Description of Louisiana and West Florida* (Philadelphia, 1784), pp. 38-39; John G. Clark, *New Orleans 1718-1812, An Economic History* (New Orleans, 1969), p. 29.

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15. *MPA*, II, 372-373, 427-428, 547-549, 591-593; «Records,» *LHQ*, I (1918), 234-236.

16. *MPA*, II, 575-576, 620-621, 638; «Historical Memoirs of M. Dumont,» *Historical Collections*, V, 119.

17. *MPA*, II, 659-660, 668; Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison, 1969), pp. 82-83.

18. «Bill for Services Rendered to Mr. Pailhoux's Negroes furnished on 10, March, 1726 by Pouyadon De Latour, surgeon major of New Orleans,» *LHQ*, I (1918), 153; Le Page, *History*, pp. 378-380.

19. Curtin, *Economic Change*, pp. 29-30; for analysis of Negro artisanship in colonial Virginia see: Gerald W. Mullin, *Flight and Rebellion: Slave Resistance in Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (New York, 1972).

20. *MPA*, I, 127, II, 494, 553-554, 599, 602, 626-627, 639; «Records,» *LHQ*, IV (1921), 230, 355-356.

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22. «Journal of Diron d'Artaguette, Sept. 1, 1722-Sept. 10, 1723,» Newton D. Mereness, ed., *Travels in the American Colonies* (New York, 1916), p. 20; *MPA*, II, 346, 372-373, 634.

23. Le Page, *History*, pp. 130-131; *MPA*, II, 565, III, 388-392, 439-443.

24. Curtin, *Economic Change*, pp. 112-115.

25. André Delcourt, *La France et les établissements français au Sénégal entre 1713 et 1763* (Paris, 1952), pp. 128-131; Curtin, *Economic Change*, pp. 178-179; Astley, *Collection of Voyages*, p. 158.

26. Astley, *Collection of Voyages*, pp. 6-14; Le Page, *History*, p. 80.

27. For traditional treatment of Louisiana's Black Code see: Alice Dunbar-Nelson, «People of Color in Louisiana,» *Journal of Negro History*, I (1916), 359-374; William Riddell, «Le Code Noir,» *Journal of Negro History*, X (1925), 321-329; and Donald Everett, «Free People of Color in Colonial Louisiana,» *Louisiana History*, VII (1966), 5-20.

28. *MPA*, II, 482, 521; The term religious pliability is taken from Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston, 1941), pp. 141, 220.

29. «Records,» *LHQ*, I (1918), 228, IV (1921), 224-229, 521, V (1922), 91-94.

30. «Memoirs of Dumont,» 121; La Harpe, *Journal*, p. 213; «Records,»,*LHQ*, III, (1920), 414, IV, 520; Laura Foner, «The Free People of Color in Louisiana and St. Domingue: A Comparative Portrait of Two Three-Caste Slave Societies,» *Journal of Social History*, III (1970), 406-430; *Census Tables*, p. 113:

Census of 1731 for the banks of the Mississippi River

Women and marriageable girls	209
Children of the family	390
European engagees	119

Men capable of bearing arms 377
Negro slaves 2529
Negro children 819
Indian slaves 47

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32. «Memoirs of Dumont,» 120; *Census Tables*, p. 123.

33. Le Page, *History*, p. 387; George W. Cable, «The Dance in Place Congo,» *Century Magazine*, XXXI (Feb. 1886), 517-532; Cable, «Creole Slave Songs,» *Century Magazine*, XXXI (April, 1886), 807-828.

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35. Le Page, *History*, pp. 24, 29; for a discussion of the precarious position of Negro slaves in frontier societies see: A. Irving Hallowell, «American Indians, White and Black: The Phenomenon of Transculturation,» *Current Anthropology*, IV (1963), 519-531; William S. Willis, «Anthropology and Negroes on the Southern Colonial Frontier,» James Curtis and Lewis Gould, eds., *The Black Experience in America* (Austin, 1970).

36. «Records,» *LHQ*, II (1919), 194, IV, 348, 357; Le Page, *History*, p. 377.

37. «Records,» *LHQ*, IV (1921), 491. «Trial and Sentence of Biron, Runaway Negro Slave, Before the Superior Council of Louisiana, 1728,» *LHQ*, VIII (1925), 23-25.

38. «Trial and Sentence,» *LHQ*, VIII (1925), 23-25.

39. «Memoirs of Dumont,» 120-121; Sidney Mintz, «Toward an Afro-American History,» *Journal of World History*, 13 (1971), 321: «The sharpest evidence of slave resistance, then, is not the historical record of armed revolts, important though these were, so much as the codes that legalized branding, flogging, burning, the amputation of limbs, hamstringing and murder to keep the slaves 'nonviolent'.»

40. «Records,» *LHQ*, III (1920), 414; Curtin, *Economic Change*, p. 181.

41. «Records,» *LHQ*, III (1920), 443-444; *MPA*, II, 573.

42. *MPA*, II, 393, 563; «Records,» *LHQ*, I (1918), 226, IV (1921), 348, V (1922), 246-247.

43. *MPA*, II, 563, III, 385-387, 421; «Records,» *LHQ*, V (1922), 97; «Cabildo Archives,» *LHQ*, III (1920), 79; «Memoirs of Dumont,» 56. The best general discussions of Negro-Indian relations during this period are Willis, «Anthropology and Negroes,» 33; and Gary B. Nash, *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early America* (Englewood Cliffs, 1974), pp. 290-297, 310-319.

44. *MPA*, I, 58, 63, 80.

45. *MPA*, I, 64-65, 71.

46. *MPA*, I, 68-70, 105, 110-113; «Letter from Father le Petit, July 12, 1730,» *Jesuit Relations*, LXVIII, 197-199.

47. «Records,» *LHQ*, IV (1921), 524; *MPA*, I, 70.

48. «Memoirs of Dumont,» 99-100; Le Page, *History*, p. 77.

49. Le Page, *History*, 77-79; George W. Cable, *The Creoles of Louisiana* (London, 1885), pp. 32-33.

50. *Census Tables*, pp. 113, 123.

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THE FRENCH AND THE NATCHEZ INDIANS IN LOUISIANA: 1700 - 1731

By Patricia D. Woods

On November 28, 1729, the Natchez Indians massacred more than two hundred settlers at Fort Rosalie, a French post in the area of present-day Natchez, Mississippi. An apparent shock to many at the time,[1] this display of Francophobia by the Indians seems to have been an aberration to the harmony apparently existing between the colonists of this European nation and the natives of North America. For nearly thirty years of the French experience in Louisiana, no serious skirmish with the red man had ever occurred. Yet, the massacre of 1729 was the third in a series of conflicts between the Louisianians and the Natchez. While it is widely held that the uprising resulted from the incompetence of the Fort Rosalie commandant,[2] it is difficult to believe that one individual should bear all the blame. A closer investigation of French-Natchez relations during the three decades prior to 1729 provides a fuller explanation of the tragedy, an event which resulted not only in the extensive loss of European life but also in the destruction of the Natchez nation.

Contact between the French in Louisiana and the Natchez had certainly begun well enough. In March 1700, Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville of Canada, the leader of Louisiana colonization at that time, received the calumet of peace from the Natchez Indians. One of several native communities visited that spring by Iberville's party, this tribe occupied territory on the Mississippi River eighteen leagues north of the Houma villages.[3] The verdant fields and vegetation of the area, some one hundred leagues from the Gulf of Mexico, proved a pleasant change from the swamps and marshes of the littoral region of the colony. Shortly after their arrival, a member of the group, Father Paul du Ru, wrote:

> The plains of the Natchez which I observed a little more attentively to-day are even more beautiful than I had realized. There are peach, plum, walnut and fig trees everywhere. It is unfortunate that this place is so remote from the mouth of the Mississippi.[4]

The land's potential for agricultural exploitation was realized when it was later learned that the Indians harvested their crops of maize twice a year.[5]

Inhabiting this rich territory were the Natchez, a nation of about 3,000 in 1700.[6] Contrary to previous reports from a missionary among them,[7] these natives appeared to be a civilized group of human beings at this encounter. On March 11, 1700, the chief's brother, escorted by a retinue of twenty men, greeted the Iberville party with the calumet of

peace.[8] Shortly after this preliminary ceremony, the newcomers met the chief, Grand Soleil, who apparently commanded the esteem of his people.[9] Although small in stature and very ill during the visit, the chief's noble manner and dignified air impressed the French. It was learned by members of the party that Grand Soleil had extensive power over his tribe, even in matters of life and death.[10]

Not only did the tribe's dignitaries welcome the French, but the «gentleness and kindliness of all the Savages» towards the Europeans indicated a general approval of their visitors. Father du Ru wrote,

> «We are living with them as with brothers. I should prefer to be alone at night in their midst than on Rue St. Jacques in Paris at nine o'clock in the evening.»[11]

The apparent civilized nature of this tribe would seem to suggest to eighteenth-century white men a greater openness to and acceptance of Christianity. Unlike his brother, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville, and other non-clerical explorers of the New World, Iberville was seriously concerned about the conversion of Indians.[12] However, by the spring of 1700, efforts at Christianizing the Natchez had proved far from successful. Even though Father de Montigny, a former missionary with the tribe, had recorded the baptisms of one hundred twenty-four children, evidence of a Catholic faith among their parents was lacking. Indeed, Montigny left the area after becoming disgusted with the lack of progress made in converting these Indians.[13]

It cannot be surprising that the Natchez were slow to adopt Christianity, since they are considered among the cultural elite of early aboriginal societies. A member of the Muskhogean linguistic family group which inhabited the southeastern area of the present-day United States, the Natchez were culturally dominant among the tribes of the region.[14] The marked distinctions of the Natchez included the despotic role of the chief, the rigid caste system, and a temple cared for by a priesthood. Although the Houmas, Bayagoulas and Colipissas also had temples, the solar cult of the Natchez with its monotheistic overtones further separated this nation from the region's polytheistic tribes.[15]

So concerned was Iberville in knowing the Natchez that at his departure he left two young boys there to learn their language and customs. In addition to this display of friendship, the French leader also gave Grand Soleil a gun, lead and powder, a blanket, hatchets and knives.[16] Of course, he had no idea at that time that these very natives would one day use European weapons to wipe out Fort Rosalie. The Canadian clearly appreciated the need for Indian friendship in conquering not only the wilderness, but also European rivals, in this case the English.

In the closing years of the seventeenth century, the competition for the English or French dominance of the North American continent had become quite obvious to the governments of Europe. As the English ventured west from the Atlantic coast and the French moved south from the Canadian wilderness, both powers began to realize the pivotal significance of the Mississippi River in the struggle for control of the continent. Indeed, the threat of English penetration into the Lower Mississippi Valley had provided the impetus for the colonization of Louisiana under Iberville's leadership in 1699. Caught up in European diplomatic rivalries, both the natives and the colonists of Louisiana became hapless pawns for European disposal.

Few European diplomats had probably

ever heard of the Chickasaw, Choctaw and Natchez Indians, the three most important tribes of lower Louisiana; none would have considered them of any significance. But to Bienville, governor of Louisiana in 1706, the importance of these tribes to French designs was quite clear and simply stated: continued possession (and protection of the territory from the English of Carolina) would depend on the friendship of these Indians. This veteran of the Canadian wilderness knew that alliance with the natives was obtained and maintained through gifts. He had also gleaned through experience that the Indians were won over by the highest bidder.

As early as 1706, it had been rumored that the English were planning to drive the French from Louisiana. The campaign had begun with the English giving the Indians higher prices for their trade goods and more presents than were the French.[17] This Anglo-French rivalry for the allegiance of these three tribes would continue throughout the first decade of the eighteenth century. As a result the Chickasaw, the most war-like, allied with the English; the Choctaw, the most numerous, allied with the French, and the Natchez sided more with the French than with the English.[18] Bienville had been convinced for years that the Indians, generally speaking, preferred the French to the English. However, the «alliance system» seems to have been determined by the amount of money each country had allotted for merchandise.[19]

Along with the problems of Indian diplomacy, the French had to face even more pressing difficulties in terms of supplies needed for survival of the colony. Both unwilling and unable to cultivate their own crops, the colonists looked to France for resupply. The mother country, however, was occupied during the early years of the eighteenth century with the War of the Spanish Succession, and distress calls from Louisiana generally went unheeded. Bienville was therefore forced to obtain food for the new establishment from the Spaniards or from the Indians. In these years of famine, the Indians' aid was largely responsible for saving the colony. Moreover, this was an era of peace among the natives, an added help to the desperate French situation.[20]

Faced with a food crisis, the colonists did very little to improve their lot; rather they spent their days in «lawlessness and idleness.»[21] The military offered no assistance in sustaining the colony. Hungry or disgruntled soldiers deserted to the English in Carolina and to the Spaniards at Pensacola. At one point, those who remained were sent by Bienville to live with the Indians, for the colony had no food to feed them.[22]

The colony obviously needed organizational and financial renovation. In 1710 Count Jérôme Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain, chief minister of the French navy, negotiated with Antoine Crozat, a wealthy financier, to lease the colony for a number of years. Everyone concerned hoped that something more profitable than mounting debts could be obtained from this white elephant on the Mississippi.

Selected as the new governor was Antoine La Mothe Cadillac, one who had already served in New France. Although he did not arrive in Louisiana until 1713, his reputation for arrogance, pomposity, self-righteousness, and generally unpleasant disposition, preceded him by several years.[23] In delineating Cadillac's duties as governor, the king touched on the problems of Indian affairs. Besides serving as the peacekeeper among them, a job formerly held by Bienville, the new governor was expected

. . . to conciliate them in their quar-

> rels which they have with each other, in order to put himself [Cadillac] in control of their commerce and to prevent the English from coming and trading among them. He must also incite the Indian allies of the French to make raids upon those Indians who prefer an alliance with the English to one with the French.[24]

Indian relations, in addition to all of the other problems of the colony, would demand from Cadillac much patience and tact, neither of which he possessed.

When the new officials, Cadillac and Jean-Baptiste du Bois du Clos, the commissioner, arrived in 1713, immediate steps were taken both to encourage Crozat's commercial enterprise and to maintain good contact with the natives. In that year, the La Loire brothers, Marc-Antoine and Louis-Auguste, accompanied by twelve people, headed north in two canoes loaded with merchandise for the Natchez country. They had been ordered to open a trading post in that area. Although very little is known about this store in its first years, by 1715 both the French and the Canadians were using it as a base for bartering with the Indians.[25]

The potential of the Natchez site aroused the interest of the ministry of the navy. On paper, the idea of a military post in this high country was an attractive proposal. Such an installation not only would protect the new store, but the presence of the military would discourage any English attempt at infiltration among the Natchez. In 1716, Bienville therefore received orders to establish two posts on the Mississippi River: one of these would be built at the Natchez and would be called Fort Rosalie, in honor of Pontchartrain's wife.[26]

When news of the plan reached the colony, Du Clos and other leaders agreed that new fortifications were needed more on the Mobile River than at the Natchez.[27] In a letter to Pontchartrain in January, 1716, Bienville, now king's lieutenant, expressed reservations about the Natchez project because Governor Cadillac had assigned him only a few raw recruits and had allotted a minimum of supplies for the construction. Bienville continued:

> There is nobody here who thinks that I shall be able to succeed in building even the fort, but as I have great influence over the minds of the Indians and as I make them do what I wish I hope I shall succeed in it . . .[28]

In the spring of that year, Bienville would have to exhibit his claimed influence «over the minds of the Indians» for the first Natchez war had already begun.

At the time of Bienville's dispatch to Pontchartrain in 1716, the story of a disastrous trip taken by Governor Cadillac to the Illinois country in the fall of 1715 was circulating throughout the colony among both the white and the Indian populace. Cadillac had apparently insulted all the tribes along the river during his journey northward. He had quarreled with them, accepted their gifts without giving anything in return and had refused their hospitality. «All the nations are talking about it with very great scorn to the shame of the French . . .» Bienville wrote.[29]

Several weeks later, Cadillac, Du Clos and Bienville received news of the murder of four Canadian *voyageurs* by the Natchez. According to Bienville, when Cadillac had declined to smoke the calumet of peace on passing through the Natchez country, the Indians had been insulted by the Great Chief of the

French. Bienville later learned that this refusal to accept the calumet, especially among leaders, had been interpreted by the Natchez as a gesture of war.[30] Although these reports of Cadillac's conduct were made by men who opposed him, scholars generally agree that by 1716 he had largely alienated the colonists as well as the Indians. He was, therefore, recalled in the fall of that year.[31]

Despite tensions between the French and the Natchez, Cadillac insisted that Bienville proceed in his assignment to construct Fort Rosalie. By March 1716 Bienville and his thirty-four men were heading toward the Natchez country where as many as 800 warriors could be awaiting their arrival. On April 23, the party stopped at the Tunica, a Christian nation located eighteen leagues from the Natchez, and learned that another French Canadian trader had been killed during March.[32]

Bienville immediately ordered that huts be built for a prison, a supply depot and a guardhouse. In the meantime, he informed the Natchez of the French arrival in the area. When three members of the lower nobility of this tribe came to offer the calumet Bienville refused it, insisting that the suns and higher echelon come. Several days later, eight suns appeared, escorted by a large retinue, unaware that the French knew about the deaths of the five traders. Bienville refused their peace offering and demanded to know the reason for the slayings. Receiving no answer, he had the suns put in chains. The French leader later sent for Grand Soleil, Serpent-Pique and Petit Soleil, the three most important chiefs. He assured them that he realized they were not directly responsible for the deaths, but insisted on being given some kind of an explanation. Had not the French arbitrated in Indian disputes? Had not the French followed Indian law by having guilty parties killed when they attacked the non-aggressive red man?[33] Moreover, could not the French unite with their Indian allies and annihilate the Natchez nation? Very much embarrassed, the suns retorted that they alone could not impose justice on the guilty.

Bienville sent Petit Soleil to the Natchez to seek the tribe's assistance in discovering the guilty parties. On his return, the Indian presented the French leader with three heads, two of which belonged to assailants and the third to a substituted victim. Angered by this Bienville put Petit Soleil into prison.

This last action prompted Indian confession that a tribal power struggle had precipitated the attacks. Several of the minor chiefs, or suns, of the tribe, two of whom were currently imprisoned at the Tunicas, had instigated the murders at English encouragement and bribes. Indeed, English presence in the Natchez country had been reported by settlers in 1715.[34] White Ground, the third chief involved, had fled to the English before French arrival into the Tunica area. As a result, Bienville decided that the captured minor chiefs along with their two warriors must die. Several days later, these people were tomahawked[35]

Despite Bienville's optimistic report to Cadillac that the French had emerged from the «war» in a stronger position, the governor apparently considered the deaths of the Indian chiefs an atrocity.[36] Captain Louis Poncereau de Richebourg, an officer with Bienville at that time, recorded that Serpent-Pique had asked that the chiefs be taken to the governor for examination before execution. Yet, Marcel Giraud, a noted historian of eighteenth-century French Louisiana, using an anonymous memoir, records that Bienville ordered the Indians executed on the trail to Mobile, out of Natchez territory where word would not spread so quickly.[37] Did Bienville unjust-

ly execute these men? Were his actions the familiar example of the white man's cruelty toward the red man? How can Bienville's tactics be explained?

About the year 1707, Bienville had concurred in the advice of his fellow officers concerning the execution of a captured Chitimacha Indian who had slain the missionary St. Cosme. In explaining his actions to a skeptical Pontchartrain, Bienville wrote in 1708:

> It is custom in all the nations not only of this continent but also of those of Canada to kill as many of the men of their enemies as they have lost on their side, otherwise it is disgraceful among them to speak of reconciliation if they have not got vengeance man for man.[38]

It would seem that Cadillac did not appreciate the Indians' approach to such matters, a view which Du Clos, however, did understand:

> . . . it is the custom among the Indians to destroy an entire nation when anyone of that nation has killed even one man of another; that this principle with which they are imbued and with which they are brought up is the very reason that they destroy each other in the manner in which they do so every day . . . and that thus in order to cause themselves to be feared by the Indians it would be necessary according to their [Indians'] principles to destroy the Natchez entirely or at the very least, according to our laws which require that every man who has killed another shall die . . .[39]

If, therefore, the execution of the Natchez, whether in Tunica territory or in the Mobile country, had been poorly received by the tribe, it seems unlikely that the French could have built Fort Rosalie that summer with Natchez assistance.

By August 1716 the construction of Fort Rosalie was completed. The Indians not only returned much of the merchandise confiscated from the slain *voyageurs*, but they also agreed in the peace settlement to contribute wood and labor for the military post. A hastily built installation, a small stake fence protecting the four supply huts within, Fort Rosalie remained in this unimproved condition until 1729, the year of its destruction.[40] Nevertheless, in dealing with the Natchez, the French had staunchly defended their position and seemed to be the victors in this first confrontation. Bienville had emerged from the crisis with complete confidence in his knowledge and ability in Indian affairs.[41]

In the following year, 1717, when John Law's Company of the West assumed control of Louisiana, everyone harbored high expectations for the colony's future success. Still, the confusion that had marked the colony in previous years continued into the Law period. The hundreds of thieves, prostitutes, beggars, and vagabonds, the refuse of the prisons of Paris, sent to Louisiana by Law's company, offered little in the way of skilled labor or agriculturists.[42] However, the «El Dorado on the Mississippi» had attracted wealthy backers interested in making a profit. When, in 1719 through royal edict, the Company of the West was combined with the Company of the Indies and the Company of China to become the Perpetual Company of the Indies, more interest than ever was had in the colony of Louisiana.

Advertised for possible concession development in Louisiana, the Natchez country,

with its location on higher ground, away from the flooding in New Orleans, appealed to many would-be settlers. Situated between the Illinois country and the coast, with a trading post already established, the commercial possibilities of the Natchez land seemed excellent. More than three hundred colonists requested permission from the Company of the Indies to settle there. The Company's lack of supplies and tools, however, prevented most new arrivals from going north. Only those independently financed were able to colonize the Natchez region.[43]

Because of flooding in the New Orleans area, by 1720 the population of the Natchez country had increased to more than 100 settlers on several concessions operating in the area. In addition to the company's tobacco enterprise which involved more than forty people, other individuals, including Marc-Antoine Hubert, former commissioner, were also developing the land. Hubert's property, the company's plantation, and Fort Rosalie were separated from one another by one league with the Great Village of the Natchez close by.[44]

Having received his concession in 1717, the commissioner's agricultural endeavor in this rich land was thriving by 1720.[45] His large house, located on Small Stream of the Natchez, one-half league from the main Natchez village, was surrounded by fields of maize. With the help of slaves, he had built a water mill used by both the settlers and the Indians.[46] The site of the future St. Catherine concession, Hubert's farm would become an area for later disputes with the Natchez.

Included among the former settlers at New Orleans who had migrated to the Natchez was Antoine Le Page du Pratz, the noted historian of early Louisiana, whose eyewitness account of the life and country in the colony serves as an excellent source for Louisiana's first years. Abandoning his flooded property on Bayou St. John near the capital, Du Pratz moved to this higher ground around 1719 or 1720 and stayed there for nearly eight years. Shortly after his arrival he entered negotiations with some of the Indians, purchasing from them a small hut as well as the cleared land surrounding it. Whether similar dealings had taken place between the Natchez and other Europeans concerning the occupation of the natives' land is not known. Even if Du Pratz exaggerated the account, it cannot be denied that he gained the trust and friendship of the Natchez who disclosed to him much of the tradition and history of their nation.[47]

Contrary to the contemporary opinions of eighteenth-century travelers in Louisiana, the Natchez had descended neither from the Egyptians, the Carthaginians nor the Vikings.[48] According to their sacred history, as told to Le Page du Pratz by the temple high priest, years before the tribe had lived in a beautiful region of the Southwest, which the Frenchman assumed was Mexico. Internal tribal disputes forced them to migrate east, wandering first toward the mountains, then south again along the Gulf of Mexico. They ascended the Mississippi River until the bluffs of the present country were sighted. Here they had resided for generations. At one time their tribal territory had extended twelve days' journey east and west, and fifteen days' journey north and south. Yet, this glorious era of the Natchez history had passed because the sacred fire of the temple, left unguarded, had gone out. Angered by this, the Great Spirit had sent a plague which killed many of their people whose lives paid for the sacrilege.[49]

Du Pratz had noticed that the ritual of the tribe seemed centered around the eternal fire which was protected in the temple. The

elder explained that it represented the sun which in turn reflected the power of the Great Spirit, who had no superiors. Their tradition held that a man and his wife, on appearing years ago, so glorious and bright that all believed they were from the sun, had commanded that the fire always be kept burning. The man said he had come to teach them a better way of life. Presenting a moral code condemning murder, adultery, theft, and lying, his wisdom moved the elders of the tribe to ask him to be their sovereign. He consented on certain conditions, maintenance of the sacred flame being one of them.[50]

The Natchez temple had impressed the Iberville party and in the twenty years since they had seen it, the structure had remained basically the same. A building of approximately forty feet by twenty feet, constructed of walnut wood and cane, mortared with mud and straw, the temple protected not only the sacred fire but also several baskets containing the bones of the past great suns. Although only princes and princesses and the members of the priestly class were permitted to enter the holy place, everyone else in the tribe was commanded to bring the best of their harvests as offerings. The temple had no windows and only one door which faced the hut of the great sun.[51]

The holy man had also commanded that his children, the suns, rule the Natchez, that the oldest princess' first male child should become the great sun. The other princes and princesses had to marry within their rank except in the case of the lowest nobility who could marry the common people as well. The rigid caste system only enhanced the sacredness of the chief.[52]

The majesty and power which the ruler had displayed to the French visitors of 1700 was still respected in the early 1720s. This continued respect for and obedience to the great sun derived primarily from the pervading influence of the tribe's elders who guarded the nation's ancient tradition. From early childhood, both the Natchez men and women lived with and learned from the wisdom of these highly regarded men. Whether supervising the children's morning baths and swimming lessons or organizing the young people's games, the ancients' presence was felt in every aspect of the people's lives. While it is true that the old men could have served as judges for the tribe, as far as Du Pratz ever knew, such «officers» were not needed. He saw no disputes among them or laziness with regard to the community work effort.[53]

According to Du Pratz, the Indians had willingly and generously helped the first settlers who arrived at Fort Rosalie. The Natchez assisted the French in clearing the land and showed them how to plant various crops such as corn and tobacco. Despite the rather sophisticated culture of these Indians, they were drawn, like so many other red men, to the white men's goods:

> . . . the Natchez [were] attracted by the easy way of trading for merchandise unfamiliar in their region, guns, powder, lead, brandy, materials . . . attracted them more and more to the French . . .[54]

Relations between the two races seemed to go well until the Indians' debts outweighed their credit.

In the fall of 1722, a sergeant of the garrison at Fort Rosalie failed to receive payment for goods from some Indians. He began a quarrel which resulted in the death of several natives. The incident was followed by a series of skirmishes between the French at the St. Catherine concession and the Natchez in which three Frenchmen, one Negro, six Indians and

some livestock were killed. Marcel Giraud's extensive investigation of the 1722 «war» suggests that conflict between some colonial leaders, namely Bienville and the engineer, Louis Pierre Leblond de la Tour, hurt Natchez-French relations. To be sure, Bienville's appointment of an assistant director to the St. Catherine concession, one Pierre Guenot de Tréfontaine, who showed poor judgment by imprisoning the Indian, did not help the situation. However, Giraud points out that Bienville's rivals argued at the time that the commandant general, when appointing Guenot, had not appreciated the hate and hostility which had existed in the Natchez area for several years.[55]

In October 1722, Charles du Tisné, an officer from the Illinois post, arrived in New Orleans with news that the Great Sun and his brother, Serpent-Pique, intended to come to New Orleans to smoke the calumet of peace. While some members of the council believed that the Indians should not be received, Bienville insisted that they be brought to New Orleans. The commandant general probably suspected the soldier's guilt, knowing quite well the fraud among the military at the posts. However, upon their arrival, Bienville being ill asked Jacques Pailloux, a fellow officer, and not Leblond de La Tour, to receive the Indians and to distribute presents. It was Pailloux who read the following message to the Indians:

> . . . in order to make thee recognize that I am quite willing to forget what has taken place I make thee this present in which there are many munitions which is an indication that I do not distrust thee at all and that thou shalt take pains to restrain thy people in such a way as to make me judge that the promise that thou dost give me will be sincere as I expect.[56]

As risky as this move by Bienville may seem, that of «arming the Natchez,» he had heard that the Chickasaw, probably at English encouragement, were organizing for war, a situation in which the French would need allies.

Following this settlement other incidents occurred in the winter of 1723 at the Natchez, resulting in much destruction on the St. Catherine concession. An elder had apparently promised some corn to a soldier in exchange for goods. Because of family sickness, the Indian explained, he had been able to raise only enough of the grain for his family. The Frenchman beat him, the blows resulting in the old man's death. Both the French and Indian populace believed that the soldier should be punished. When he received a mere reprimand from the commanding officer, the Indians from Apple Village made several raids on the settlement, burning even Du Pratz's house. By July 1723, reinforcements arrived at Fort Rosalie, led by Captain Charles-Henry Desliettes, Lieutenant Detchéparre and Ensign Pierre-Benoit Payen de Noyan.[57]

At a meeting of the Superior Council in August 1723, Bienville petitioned the body for men and funds to carry out his war on the Natchez. His argument was reinforced with reports that additional attacks on the St. Catherine concession had taken place even after the agreement of the preceding fall.[58]

That Bienville had delayed in settling the dispute cannot be denied. To be sure, he was criticized for waiting. When he finally departed New Orleans on September 29, 1723, only four canoes of soldiers and friendly Indians accompanied him.[59] Upon arriving at Fort Rosalie, Bienville summoned the post's officers to a council of war, at which time it was decided that no war would be waged against the Natchez. Serpent-Pique, the highly regarded war chief, called on to calm the members

of Apple Village, helped with the peace arrangements. Bienville had determined that the French were responsible for the trouble of the preceding October as well as for subsequent clashes. Of course, all of these peace overtures depended on whether the Natchez would hand over the heads of twelve men from Apple Village; several chiefs were included. The demands were met.[60]

Bienville probably considered the matter closed, believing that French frontier justice had once again prevailed. Yet, in the following months, the Natchez ceased trading with the French, barely acknowledging them in passing. They also believed that Bienville, formerly considered a just man by them, had betrayed them with this so-called fair peace.[61]

The pervading conditions of unruliness among the military in French Louisiana applied to the officers as well. In the midst of tensions in the fall of 1723, it was reported that soldiers Paquier and Detchéparre had settled a private quarrel by a duel in which both men were wounded, quite costly for a post with less than thirty soldiers. To worsen the situation, Charles du Tisné, an officer and known homosexual, had been accused not only of abusing male soldiers and colonists, but also of harassing many other settlers. It was reported:

> Of all the inhabitants there are not four who do not complain of having been mistreated by this commandant. He talks to them only of chains and the pillory for the least things and often enough he would go on to carry it out . . .[62]

Having to follow a leader who tyrannized his own people, the soldiers' consequent mistreatment of the red men should not be surprising.

By 1725, at least from the French point of view, the Indians had been «brought under subjection,» with trade relations between the French and the natives restored. Funeral orations given at the death of Serpent-Pique that year pleaded for Indian peace with the French.[63]

However, in the coming months, little time was expended in trading disagreements between the Europeans and the Natchez. Serious efforts had been undertaken by the colony to push tobacco as a staple crop. In 1719, the colony's government had recommended to the company that the plant be cultivated at Natchez, «since it is the most suitable place to gather the best tobacco, . . .»[64] The following year the Company of the Indies had brought to Louisiana a tobacco grower from the south of France, M. Montplaisir de La Gauchay, who was assigned to the company's concession at the Natchez to develop tobacco there.[65] The first attempts proved to be disastrous failures. The tobacco rotted because neither the hogsheads for storing nor boats for shipping the crop to New Orleans were provided by the company. The chief suggestions to improve the effort included the construction of workshops for spinning and rolling the tobacco and for the manufacture of hogsheads. It was also hoped that a force of Negro slaves could be purchased. The committee estimated that a sum of 25,770 *livres* was needed to set up the operations.[66]

By the summer of 1725, the council's plans had been accepted. Governor Etienne Périer promised not only Negro slaves, but also engaged two English tobacco growers from Carolina whom he had found at Cap Français. One of these men agreed to go to the Natchez to teach the colonists how to cultivate the plant. While it is true that the Natchez had grown their own tobacco for some time, the crop had been more for local consumption

and never had had to be cured for market.[67]

Despite the fact that the crop grew well, everyone had problems meeting the company's requirements for market preparations, including the Indians:

> The Natchez did not *know that it was necessary to deliver their tobacco in small bunches. They brought it in twists which Mr. De La Chaise was obliged to take on the basis of ten sous a pound in order not to let them be ruined. They have lost considerably by it . . .*[68]

Why had the Indians lost? Were they cultivating more tobacco than food for their people? The subsequent regulations to the colonists stated that after 1728 no tobacco would be accepted in twists, only in small bunches.[69] Did the Indians not receive the information and consequently had their crop been rejected? Or were they ever paid? Although definite evidence is lacking, it would seem that in light of the most recent dealings with the French, the Natchez could have been in debt for past exchanges.

The tobacco venture indeed appeared as a last desperate effort by the Company of the Indies to derive some kind of a profit from the failing colony: «. . . [tobacco] must constitute the principal object of the colony,» wrote the governor. «We do not doubt the success of this plant at all . . .»[70] Predictions were made of the tobacco's unlimited success on the international market, and the role the Natchez country was playing in the enterprise.

> «The French *settlement* at Natchez is becoming important. Much tobacco is grown there which is considered the best in the Country.»[71]

How much of the 300,000 pounds of the crop shipped from the colony on the eve of the Fort Rosalie massacre had been grown at the Natchez is not known.[72] To be sure with both the French and Indians cultivating tobacco under increasing company pressure, the area must have contributed a sizeable amount. How equally the Indians were treated with regard to prices is not known. But, the opportunity for exploitation was great. Perhaps, they had stopped working by 1729 and were considered among those natives described by Périer as «impossible to get any service from . . . for the trades or for cultivation of the earth.»[73]

It was true that few Indians were ever enslaved by the French in Louisiana,[74] the colonists finding the black man more conducive to bondage. On the other hand, it could be said that by 1729, the Natchez had lost much of the independence and the freedom which the wilderness had given them. Several years before, Serpent-Pique, one of their greatest war chiefs, upbraided the nation in a moving, mournful speech witnessed by Le Page du Pratz:

> What need did we have of the French? Do you think that before them we were not living better than we do now that we deprive ourselves of a part of our corn, game and fish which we kill for them even when we need them? Was it their guns? We used to use our bows and arrows which sufficed in providing us a good living. Was it their blankets, white, blue or red? We have animal skins which are warmer . . . Before the arrival of the French, we were living as men who know how to survive with what they have; in place of this, today we are walking as slaves . . .[75]

In the fall of 1729, three officers, twenty-five soldiers, two hundred male colonists, eighty female colonists, one hundred fifty children and two hundred eighty black slaves were living in the Fort Rosalie area in the Natchez country. Despite the tobacco success, they often had difficulty getting enough to eat because of company neglect and the commandant's greed.[76]

Most of the colonists' problems at this time were caused by the commandant, Captain Detchéparre, a tyrannical individual whose presence had to be tolerated because of his friendship with Governor Périer. That the governor did not have Bienville's appreciation for the complexities of French-Indian relations can certainly be seen in his appointment of Detchéparre as commandant at Fort Rosalie, a very sensitive area with regard to relations with the natives. Detchéparre had been called on the carpet several times for mistreatment of white settlers. Yet, with Périer's pardon, the commandant had been allowed to return.[77]

By the summer of 1729, Detchéparre was looking for land in the Natchez country for a plantation. After surveying the area, he decided that the Great Village of the tribe was the best location. On reaching his decision, the captain insisted that the Indians move immediately, within two days at the latest.

To be sure the leaders of the tribe, now numbering 1200,[78] were shocked at the suggestion. The chief, a relative of one of the twelve men whose head was taken in the last war with the French, was particularly irritated. Arguments made to the commandant by the tribe's elders failed to move Detchéparre. After a meeting of the council, the Indians asked for a three-month postponement of removal in order that they might harvest their crops as well as pay the commandant for his kindness in allowing them to stay. Relations had broken down too completely, and the Indians moved to destroy the French settlement in its entirety.[79]

On the morning of November 28, a large hunting party of the Natchez arrived at the French settlement, asking for the use of French munitions for their expedition. The chiefs were seeking Detchéparre with gifts from their harvest for the final ceremony of the land exchange. When Detchéparre came to the door of his cabin, the natives opened fire immediately,[80] beginning a battle which raged most of the day, resulting in the death of one hundred forty-four men, thirty-five women and fifty-six children.[81]

First news of the tragedy reported all the settlers killed with the exception of some twenty men and five or six Negro slaves who had escaped to New Orleans to recount the story. However, as many as fifty-four women and children and one hundred Negro slaves were released from the Natchez when the French, led by Sieur de Louboey, finally reached the Natchez country in January 1730. Communications proved both slow and distorted with the colonists' retaliation to the attack taking two months. In the midst of negotiations at that time, the tribe slipped away one night, and after crossing the Mississippi River, headed north up the Black River where they stayed for over a year.[82]

The fear of a general Indian uprising spread throughout the colony. Governor Périer, in a hysterical move, had a peaceful tribe, the Chaouchas, killed as a warning for the small tribes in the lower part of the colony.[83]

By February 1731 the governor, leading French and Indian forces, managed to drive the Natchez from their forts on the Black River, at which time the tribe divided into three

groups. The largest contingent of women and children, directed by the great sun, St. Cosme, was defeated in the Natchitoches area in the fall of 1731. The great sun, several lesser suns, some forty warriors, more than two hundred women and children were captured at that time. They were sent to New Orleans where they were shipped to Cap Français on St. Domingue, «where they were sold as slaves to the profit of the Company.»[84]

No one knows how many members of the Natchez tribe survived. Some found refuge with the Chickasaw, others with the Cherokee. The Natchez people were now scattered, too few in number to offer ever again any organized resistance to the white man who had destroyed their nation.

Traditional opinion concerning the French and Indian relations in colonial North America holds that the natives received better treatment from the French than from the other Europeans who explored and settled the continent. This interpretation, however, was largely arrived at through the study of the Canadian fur trade, a form of resource exploitation into which the Indians were easily integrated. Indeed, French trapping disturbed the social ecology of the wilderness far less than the Spanish mining or English farming. Perhaps a general assessment of these racial relations should stress not the national traits of the various Europeans who came, but rather their intended use of the land and other resources which they found.

Involved in the development of Louisiana in the Fort Rosalie area were Frenchmen, some of whom were Canadians. Yet, these people in attempting to farm the land, much in the way the English did, experienced a breakdown in Indian relations which resulted in tragedy for both sides. To be sure, the Natchez dependence on European goods paralleled that of the Indians involved in the fur trade; but, for the most part, the Indians of the north continued to roam freely, to trap and to trade as they had done for years in a wilderness which was owned by no one and shared by all. On the other hand, when the land became the private property of individuals, as in the cases of concessions and the Company's tobacco development at the Natchez, the Indian was squeezed out. On realizing that the French no longer intended to share the land, but rather to take it all, the Natchez struck back violently when faced with the ultimatum of removal.

Notes

1. Etienne Périer to Count Maurepas, December 5, 1729, Dunbar Rowland and Albert Sanders, eds., *Mississippi Provincial Archives*, 3 vols. (Jackson, 1927-32), I, 54. Diron d'Artaguette to Maurepas, February 9, 1730, *ibid.*, 57. Hereinafter cited as *MPA*. Jean de Pradel to his brother Charles, December 6, 1729, in A. Baillardel and A. Prioult, *Le Chevalier de Pradel, vie d'un colon français en Louisiane au XVIII siècle* (Paris, 1928), pp. 63-64.

2. Dumont de Montigny, *Mémoires historiques sur la Louisiane* (Paris, 1753), II, 125; Antoine Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1758), III, 231; Charles Edwards O'Neill, *Church and State in French Colonial Louisiana: Policy and Politics to 1732* (New Haven, 1966), p. 231.

3. Pierre Margry, ed., *Mémoires et documents: Decouvertes et établissements des Français dans l'ouest et dans le sud de l'Amérique septentrionale*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1879-88), IV, 410. Hereinafter cited as Margry.

4. *Journal of Paul du Ru: Missionary Priest to Louisiana: February 1 to May 8, 1700* (Chicago, 1934), p. 38; Margry, IV, 412; André Penicaut, a ship's carpenter with the group, recorded that all the food and necessities of life could be had here. Margry, V, 444.

5. Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, 73 vols. (Cleveland, 1896-1901), LXV, 145. Hereinafter cited as *Jesuit Relations*.

6. Marcel Giraud, *Histoire de la Louisiane française* 4 vols. (Paris, 1954), I, 173. Several others have estimated that the tribe numbered as many as 4000. Alvin M. Josephy, *The Indian Heritage of America* (New York, 1968), p. 106; and John R. Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States, Bureau of American Ethnology*, Bulletin 137 (Washington, 1946), p. 10.

7. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXV, 135.

8. Margry, IV, 410; *Journal of Paul du Ru*, p. 34.

9. Bénard de La Harpe, *Journal historique de l'Etablissement des Français à la Louisiane* (New Orleans, 1831), p. 28; *Journal of Paul du Ru*, p. 34.

10. Margry, IV, 411-12; La Harpe, *Journal historique*, p. 28; *Journal of Paul du Ru*, p. 34.

11. *Journal of Paul du Ru*, p. 38.

12. O'Neill, *Church and State*, p. 23.

13. *Journal of Paul du Ru*, pp. 36-37; Margry, IV, 411; *ibid.*, V, 444.

14. Clark Wissler, *Indians in the United States* (Garden City, N. Y., 1949), pp. 141-142. See Swanton, *The Indians of the Southeastern United States*, p. 10, for population figures.

15. John R. Swanton, «The Ethnological Position of the Natchez Indians,» *American Anthropologist*, New Series, IX (1907), 527; John R. Swanton, *Indian Tribes of the Lower Mississippi Valley and Adjacent Coast of the Gulf of Mexico, Bureau of American Ethnology*, Bulletin 43 (Washington, 1911), p. 717.

16. Margry, IV, 412.

17. Bienville to Pontchartrain, July 28, 1706, *MPA*, II, 24.

18. In 1703 or 1704, the Natchez and the Houmas had warred on the Attakapas, a tribe which had killed some Frenchmen. Bienville to Pontchartrain, September 6, 1704, *MPA*, III, 23.

19. Bienville to Pontchartrain, July 28, 1706, *MPA*, II, 24; Bienville to Pontchartrain, February 20, 1707, *MPA*, III, 37; King Louis XIV to De Muy, June 30, 1707, *ibid.*, 52; King Louis XIV to Lamothe Cadillac, May 13, 1710, *ibid.*, 146; Bienville to Pontchartrain, October 27, 1711, *ibid.*, 161; Memoir on Louisiana by Mandeville, April 29, 1709, *MPA*, II, 48; D'Artaguette to Pontchartrain, June 20, 1710, *ibid.*, 56; Périer and de La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, July 31, 1728, *ibid.*, 580; Périer to the Abbé Raguet, August 14, 1728, *ibid.*, 585.

20. D'Artaguette to Pontchartrain, June 20, 1710, *ibid.*, 59; Bienville to Pontchartrain, October 27, 1711, *MPA*, III, 158-59; D'Artaguette to Pontchartrain, February 12, 1710; *MPA*, II, 54; Bienville to Pontchartrain, February 25, 1708, *MPA*, III, 113.

21. Memoir of D'Artaguette to Pontchartrain on present condition of Louisiana, May 12, 1712, *MPA*, II, 61.

22. *Ibid.*, 60; Giraud, I, 204; Du Clos to Pontchartrain, July 10, 1713, *MPA*, II, 75.

23. La Mothe Cadillac, Du Clos to Pontchartrain, October 20, 1713, *MPA*, III, 90-91.

24. King Louis XIV to La Mothe Cadillac, May 13, 1710, *ibid.*, 144.

25. Margry, V, 506; Giraud, I, 321.

26. *Ibid.*, 320.

27. Du Clos to Pontchartrain, June 7, 1716, *MPA*, III, 204; Giraud, I, 324.

28. Bienville to Pontchartrain, January 2, 1716, *MPA*, III, 194-95.

29. *Ibid.*, 194.

30. Bienville to Raudot, January 20, 1716, *ibid.*, 198; Du Clos to Pontchartrain, June 7, 1716, *ibid.*, 209.

31. Marcel Giraud, *Histoire de la Louisiane française. Années de Transition, 1715-1717*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1958), II, 178-79; O'Neill, *Church and State*, chapter 3.

32. Bienville to Raudot, January 20, 1716, *MPA*, III, 198.

33. «Mémoire de M. de Richebourg sur la première guerre des Natchez,» in Benjamin French, ed., *Historical Collections of Louisiana*, 5 vols. (New York, 1846-53), III, 245.

34. Margry, V, 506.

35. «Mémoire de M. de Richebourg,» 241-52.

36. Bienville to Cadillac, June 23, 1716, *MPA*, III, 213.

37. «Mémoire de M. de Richebourg,» 250; Giraud, II, 151.

38. Bienville to Pontchartrain, February 25, 1708, *MPA*, III, 116.

39. Du Clos to Pontchartrain, June 7, 1716, *ibid.*, 210.

40. Bienville to Raudot, January 20, 1716, *ibid.*, 198.

41. Bienville to Hubert, September 19, 1717, *MPA*, III, 223.

42. James D. Hardy, «The Transportation of Con-

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victs to Colonial Louisiana,» *Louisiana History*, VII (1966), 207-22. See this article for a complete and detailed discussion of this effort at colonization.

43. Memoir of Charles Le Gac, director of the Company of the Indies in Louisiana, 1718-1721, 54. A typescript of the French manuscript in the Louisiana State University Library, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, a WPA project in Louisiana.

44. Pierre de Charlevoix, S. J., *Journal historique d'un Voyage par ordre du roi dans l'amérique septentrionale*, 6 vols., (Paris, 1744), II, 415; Marcel Giraud, *Histoire de la Louisiane française: Epoque de John Law, 1717-1720*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1966), III, 78.

45. «Letters of Concession Grant» in French, *Historical Collections*, III, 78.

46. Memoir of Charles Le Gac, 55.

47. Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography*, 21 vols. (New York, 1928-44), V, 534; Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire*, I, 126-27, *ibid.*, II, 307, 321.

48. Father Le Maire, *Mémoire inédit sur la Louisiane, 1717* (New Orleans, 1899), pp. 11-13; La Harpe, *Journal historique*, pp. 399-403.

49. Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire*, III, 62, 338.

50. *Ibid.*, 326, 330-32.

51. *Ibid.*, 335-37; Charlevoix, *Journal historique*, II, 417; Margry, V, 451-52; Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXV, 139; *Journal of Paul du Ru*, p. 36.

52. Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire*, II, 334; *Journal of Paul du Ru*, 30; Margry, V, 453.

53. Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire*, II, 312-20.

54. *Ibid.*, I, 179.

55. La Harpe, *Journal historique*, 343; Minutes of the Superior Council of Louisiana, August 3, 1723, *MPA*, III, 360; Marcel Giraud, *Histoire de la Louisiane française: La Louisiane après le systems de Law (1721-1723)*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1974), IV, 289-91.

56. Presents Given to the Natchez and Speech Made to Them by Order of Bienville, November 6, 1722, *MPA*, III, 327-29; Giraud, IV, 356-58.

57. Le Page du Pratz, I, 180-87; Giraud, IV, 293.

58. Minutes of the Superior Council of Louisiana, August 3, 1723, *MPA*, III, 360.

59. La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, October 18, 1723, *MPA*, II, 374.

60. Minutes of the Council of War, November 23, 1723, *MPA*, III, 385-87; Memoir on the Services of Bienville, 1725, *ibid.*, 493.

61. Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire*, I, 200-02.

62. De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, October 18, 1723, *MPA*, II, 382; De La Chaise and the Four Councillors of Louisiana to the Council of the Company of the Indies, May 20, 1725, *ibid.*, 467; O'Neill, *Church and State*, 275; Memoir from the Council of Louisiana to the Council of the Company of the Indies, April 23, 1725, *MPA*, II, 459; Father Raphael to the Abbé Raguet, December 28, 1726, *ibid.*, 527-28.

63. Memoir from the Council of Louisiana to the Council of the Company of the Indies, April 23, 1725, *ibid.*, 459; Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire*, III, 50.

64. Minutes of the Council of Commerce of Louisiana, October 26, 1719, *MPA*, III, 268; Memoir on Louisiana by Bienville, 1726, *ibid.*, 522.

65. Margry, V, 573-74; Giraud, III, 368.

66. Memoir on Tobacco at Natchez, October, 1724, *MPA*, II, 397-98; Committee of Louisiana to the Directors of the Company, November 8, 1724, *ibid.*, 399.

67. La Chaise and the Four Councillors of Louisiana to the Council of the Company of the Indies, May 20, 1725, *ibid.*, 467; From the Council of Louisiana to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, August 28, 1725, *ibid.*, 492; Périer and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, April 22, 1727, 534; *Journal of Paul du Ru*, 37; La Harpe, *Journal Historique*, 28; Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire*, III, 44-46; Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXV, 142-43.

68. Périer and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, April 22, 1727, *MPA*, II, 533; Périer and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, November 2, 1727, *ibid.*, 548-49.

69. Périer and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, November 3, 1728, *ibid.*, 593.

70. Périer and De La Chaise to the Directors of the Company of the Indies, April 22, 1727, *ibid.*, 532. The brackets were added by the author.

71. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LXVII, 311; Périer to the Abbé Raguet, April 25, 1727, *MPA*, II, 543.

72. Lewis Gray, *The Agriculture of the South to 1860*, 2 vols. (Washington, 1933), I, 70.

73. Périer to the Abbé Raguet, May 12, 1728, *MPA*, II, 574.

74. Pontchartrain to De Muy, June 30, 1707, *MPA*, III, 47; Bienville to Pontchartrain, October 12, 1708, *ibid.*, II, 37; Pontchartrain to Bienville, May 10, 1710, *ibid.*, III, 141. On the number of Indian slaves in lower Louisiana, see Nancy M. Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisiana during the French Regime* (New York, 1917), pp. 229-30.

75. Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire*, I, 204-05.

76. From Diron d'Artaguette to Maurepas, March 20, 1730, *MPA*, I, 76; Father Raphael to the Abbé Raguet, May 15, 1725, *ibid.*, II, 483.

77. See Jean Delanglez, «The Natchez Massacre and Governor Périer,» *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XVII (1934), 631-41; H. Schlarman, *From Quebec to New Orleans* (Belleville, Illinois, 1929), p. 244; Dumont de Montigny, *Mémoires historiques*, II, 127.

78. Memoir on Louisiana by Bienville, 1726, *MPA*, III, 530-31. Bienville estimated that the Natchez had six hundred warriors in 1725.

79. Dumont de Montigny, *Mémoires historiques*, II, 128-35.

80. *Ibid.*, 139-44; From D'Artaguette to Maurepas, March 20, 1730, *MPA*, I, 76.

81. From Father Philibert, June 9, 1730, *MPA*, I, 126.

82. From Diron d'Artaguette to Maurepas, March 20, 1730, *MPA*, I, 76; from Périer to Maurepas, March 18, 1730, *ibid.*, 65-68; Dumont de Montigny, *Mémoires historiques*, II, 192-93.

83. Jean de Pradel to his mother, March 22, 1730 in Baillardel and Prioult, *Le Chevalier de Pradel*, pp. 70-71.

84. Dumont de Montigny, *Mémoires historiques*, II, 202-08; James Mooney, «The End of the Natchez,» *American Anthropologist*, I, (1899), 513-15.

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LA LOUISIANE AVANT VAUDREUIL

Par Guy Frégault

1. LE PAYS

Quel pays merveilleux que la Louisiane! «Un des plus beaux du monde», avait déclaré son fondateur, Iberville.[1] Au début de son séjour à la Nouvelle-Orléans, Vaudreuil s'exclame, dans un de ses rares moments d'enthousiasme: «Cette Colonie, que je regarde comme la plus belle de l'Univers» . . .[2] Vers le milieu du XVIII[e] siècle, personne ne croit plus aux montagnes d'or et d'argent que la colossale campagne publicitaire de Law a fait briller au soleil de cette terre exotique, mais il reste quelque chose de l'éblouissement d'autrefois. Dans un style trop fleuri, un historien de l'époque en célèbre les fleurs,

> «si abondantes depuis le mois de Mai jusqu'à la fin de l'Eté, qu'à peine peut-on voir l'herbe des Prairies; & si variées, que l'on ne sçait laquelle regarder & prendre pour la plus belle».[3]

A un autre, l'eau du Mississipi semble «pure et délicieuse»; on s'en fait, rapporte-t-il, servir à table jusqu'en Europe; elle a même «la vertu . . . de contribuer à la fécondité des femmes».[4] Et le climat! «Il semble», raisonne l'auteur d'un rapport officiel,

> «que la beauté et la bonté de ce climat influe sur tout, car les Demoiselles sont bien faites, Jolies, Guayes et fort intelligentes.»[5]

La Louisiane est un paradis terrestre.[6]

Où passent les limites de la colonie? On ne l'a jamais su au juste. Au sud, la côte du golfe du Mexique trace une frontière naturelle. A l'ouest, le pays s'étend jusqu'à une ligne qu'il est possible de tirer à partir d'un point posé à mi-chemin entre Galveston et la Nouvelle-Orléans: d'un côté, le poste espagnol des Adayes, de l'autre, le poste français des Natchitoches sur la rivière Rouge, séparés par une zone neutre de sept lieues, gardent les confins du Nouveau-Mexique et de la Louisiane;[7] puis, la ligne se prolonge sur la rivière Rouge, court vers le nord, englobe l'Oklahoma actuel, découpe une énorme tranche du Kansas et du Nebraska et va se perdre dans l'immensité du Nord-Ouest;[8] ici, la cour de France redoute les précisions: elle interdit même à ses géographes de définir une frontière,[9] si bien que des savants pourront s'amuser gravement

> «à faire baigner les rivages de la Louisiane par les flots de la Mer Glaciale ou par ceux de la légendaire Mer de l'Ouest»;

des trappeurs aventureux remontent de plus

en plus loin le cours du Missouri: en 1743, on en trouve un qui s'est installé dans le Dakota-Nord.[10] Au nord, les limites de la colonie se heurtent à celles du Canada: source de frictions continuelles entre l'administration de Québec et celle de la Nouvelle-Orléans, la question ne saurait se régler que par une entente sur les frontières du pays des Illinois, vaste région qui comprend, outre les rives de l'Ohio et, bien entendu, celles du Mississipi au nord de ce dernier, le territoire arrosé par la rivière Illinois et par le Missouri; le tout forme une ceinture qui touche, d'une part, aux Alleghanys et, de l'autre, s'allonge vers les Rocheuses;[11] en août 1717, le gouvernement métropolitain a rattaché le pays des Illinois à la Louisiane[12] et elle le lui a laissé; c'est proprement la Haute-Louisiane.[13] A l'est, la colonie s'étend, en théorie, jusqu'aux possessions britanniques – «la Caroline et la Virginie», écrit l'abbé Le Maire,[14] – et jusqu'à la Floride espagnole. Chez les Anglais, des hommes pondérés comme le Dr Douglass, de Boston, et le Dr Franklin reconnaîtraient assez volontiers, du moins pour l'instant, que les montagnes bornent les provinces de l'Atlantique, pourvu, observe l'un, que ne s'effectue pas la jonction de la Louisiane et du Canada; si seulement, réfléchit l'autre, les traitants britanniques disposaient du commerce des Chérakis et des Chicachas.[15] En réalité, le poste le plus avancé de la colonie française à l'est est celui des Ouiatanons, sur le cours supérieur du Wabash, à peu près sur l'emplacement actuel de Lafayette (Indiana).[16] De là, une ligne descend vers le sud au-delà du fort Vincennes, s'enfonce à travers le Kentucky et le Tennessee et emporte tout l'ouest de l'Alabama pour aller tomber sur le fort Toulouse (ou des Alibamons), quatre milles plus bas que le Wetumpka d'aujourd'hui, près du confluent des rivières Coosa et Talapoosa.[17] Il ne reste qu'à se diriger ensuite vers la Mobile, puis, au sortir de la baie du même nom, l'on se retrouve dans le golfe du Mexique.

Ancrée à la vallée du Mississipi par une vingtaine de postes[18] qu'enserre un réseau de voies de navigation,[19] la Louisiane est habitée par un petit peuple d'origine canadienne et d'origine française. En 1746, on donne à la colonie 8,830 habitants, dont 4,000 Blancs.[20] Les esclaves noirs et, parmi eux, un certain nombre des mulâtres[21] comptent donc pour plus de la moitié de la population, ce qui n'empêche pas les colons de se plaindre sans cesse du manque de main-d'œuvre servile. Les habitants se sont partagés en trois zones principales: la première gravite autour de Mobile; la deuxième, sur le Mississipi, a pour pôle d'attraction la Nouvelle-Orléans; la troisième s'est constituée au cœur du pays des Illinois. La capitale elle-même apparaît comme un petit monde à part.

Mobile fut la première capitale de la colonie. Iberville l'a fondée en 1702.[22] Lorsque le siège de l'administration s'est transporté sur le Mississipi, la ville a perdu plusieurs de ses citoyens, qui ont émigré avec les bureaux. A l'époque de Vaudreuil, elle compte 150 à 200 blancs et autant de nègres; mais sa garnison, composée de 120 soldats, demeure relativement considérable.[23] C'est qu'elle occupe une position stratégique de premier ordre, à proximité de la Floride. Défendue par un fort «assez régulier», elle commande la région des Chactas, alliés trop nombreux pour qu'on les néglige et trop vivement tentés par les marchandises anglaises pour qu'on ne les surveille pas. Il s'y fait un fort commerce de pelleteries et c'est là que se déroulent les conférences annuelles avec les Indiens.[24]

Sur le Mississipi, de part et d'autre de la Nouvelle-Orléans, quelque quarante habitations d'agriculteurs s'élèvent, clairsemées, dans l'espace de vingt lieues environ qui sépare le Détour à l'Anglais de la côte des Allemands.[25] Les villages de ces derniers se situent à dix lieues au-dessus de la capitale. En-

voyés d'Europe par les soins de Law, ces colons se sont groupés, depuis 1723, en trois collectivités pittoresques sur la rive droite du Mississipi. Leur nombre se grossit lentement de soldats licenciés des compagnies suisses. Laborieux, paisibles, plutôt timides, il s'adonnent aux travaux que les Canadiens n'aiment guère: la culture du sol et l'élevage. Les légumes de leurs potagers, leurs melons d'eau fort prisés des connaisseurs, leur beurre et leur fromage garnissent les tables de la Nouvelle-Orléans. Ils sont une centaine de Blancs, secondés par 200 esclaves.[26] Leur commandant, M. d'Arensbourg, homme serviable et intelligent, se gagnera la faveur de Vaudreuil comme il s'est mérité l'estime de Bienville.[27] L'établissement de la Pointe-Coupée, à dix lieues plus haut, est peut-être deux fois plus populeux que la côte des Allemands. Les habitants y cultivent le riz, le maïs, le coton et ils font du bois de construction qu'ils laissent flotter jusqu'à la capitale. L'endroit est surtout renommé pour son tabac, d'une «sève . . . fine et délicate». La Pointe-Coupée prospère et prospérerait davantage si ses agriculteurs aimaient la terre.[28] Il faut remonter le Mississipi sur cinquante lieues pour atteindre le poste des Natchez qu'avoisinaient autrefois soixante habitations; depuis le massacre (1729), il n'en reste plus rien qu'une garnison «emprisonnée, pour ainsi dire, dans un fort, par la crainte des Chicachats et autres Sauvages ennemis».[29] Le même sort attend l'établissement des Arkansas, à cent lieues au-dessus des Natchez: un raid effectué par les Chicachas dispersera les habitants et ne laissera subsister qu'un fort où s'arrêteront, pour s'y rafraîchir, les convois des Illinois.[30]

Ailleurs, des petites colonies se sont agglomérées autour d'un poste: par exemple, à Tombecbé, sur la rivière du même nom [Tombigbee],[31] où Bienville a fait construire en 1736 un fort onéreux au roi, mais commode pour la traite;[32] ou encore aux Natchitoches, où les habitants sont accourus en assez grand nombre, attirés par la perspective des mines d'argent que semblait leur promettre le voisinage du Nouveau-Mexique;[33] une amère déconvenue les attendait, ils ont dû se rabattre sur le blé, le riz et le bétail. Ces foyers de colonisation comptent assez peu, comparés aux gros établissements des Illinois. Les Illinois constituent la clef de voûte de l'empire américain de la France.[34] Cinq villages y dépendent du fort de Chartres: Kaskaskia, dont l'importance grandit sans cesse, la Prairie du Rocher, Saint-Philippe, qui tient son nom de l'entreprenant Philippe-François Renault, Cahokia, qui rivalise d'ancienneté avec Kaskaskia et Sainte-Geneviève, sur la rive ouest du Mississipi.[35] C'est une région agricole dont Charlevoix prédit, dès 1721, qu'elle pourra nourrir toute la Louisiane, celle-ci fût-elle peuplée jusqu'à la mer.[36] De fait, les Illinois produisent trois fois plus de vivres qu'ils n'en peuvent consommer,[37] ils sont le grenier de l'Amérique et l'on a même, en 1735, envoyé de la farine des Illinois aux troupes de la Martinique et de Saint-Domingue.[38] Mais les habitants résistent mal à la tentation, fort naturelle, de négliger l'agriculture au profit de la traite,[39] l'exploitation des mines de plomb les attire,[40] il faut les attacher au sol un peu malgré eux. Chez eux, l'on se croirait presque au Canada. Les mœurs, les ressources naturelles et les paysages, tout rappelle la vieille colonie. La structure sociale des établissements diffère plus de celle du sud que de celle du nord: ici, par exemple, l'esclavage n'apparaît pas comme un facteur très important de la vie économique. D'après le recensement détaillé de 1752, la population des Illinois s'établit à 768 blancs, 445 noirs et 147 esclaves indigènes. Près de la moitié des colons, 350, et plus de la moitié des nègres, 246, se concentrent à Kaskaskia. Le fort de Chartres vient ensuite avec 185 blancs et 88 noirs. Saint-Philippe compte 70 habitants de race blanche, Cahokia, 89, la Prairie du Rocher, 53 et Sainte-Geneviève, 21;

dans ces quatre villages, les nègres se distribuent comme suit: 45 à Saint-Philippe, 24 à Cahokia, 40 à la Prairie du Rocher et 2 à Sainte-Geneviève. Si, en gros, l'on peut dire qu'il y a trois nègres pour cinq blancs, ce serait une erreur de penser que la main-d'œuvre de couleur se répartit en réalité de cette façon parmi les Franco-Canadiens de la Haute-Louisiane. 250 nègres sur 445 appartiennent à quinze concessions. Là-dessus, 114 sont attachés à onze moyennes exploitations et 136 à quatre grands établissements: celui de Bienvenue, à Kaskaskia, en absorbe 55; celui des Pères Jésuites, au même village, 34; celui du curé de Cahokia, 19 et celui du fonctionnaire Buchet à Saint-Philippe, 28. Les grands planteurs qui règnent sur un peuple d'esclaves, il faut les chercher au sud.[41]

Quel contraste avec l'atmosphère semi-tropicale de la Nouvelle-Orléans! Charlevoix s'y était arrêté en 1722. Il avait beau ouvrir les yeux, il n'y voyait rien: rien que deux cents personnes «campées» au bord du Mississipi et un plan «fort beau & fort régulier» que lui montrait Pauger; et il réfléchissait: «Il ne sera pas aussi aisé d'exécuter [ce plan], qu'il l'a été de le tracer sur le papier.»[42] Cinq ou six ans plus tard, des rues larges et bordées de maisons de brique s'alignent non plus sur le papier, mais sous les pas. Les Louisianais aiment leur capitale. Une de leurs chansons favorites lui prête déjà «autant d'apparence que la Ville de Paris».[43] Au moment où Vaudreuil y arrive, elle offre le spectacle d'une ville typiquement américaine. Toutes les rues se croisent à angle droit, découpant 65 carrés de 50 toises, divisés chacun en 12 emplacements. A ces carrés, l'on donne le nom curieux d'îles;[44] nom assez juste: pour égoutter le sol spongieux, un fossé court des deux côtés des rues, si bien qu'on ne peut passer d'une banquette à l'autre – c'est ainsi que l'on désigne ici les trottoirs[45] – sans franchir des petits ponts de brique.[46] Au centre, face au fleuve, s'ouvre la Place d'Armes, flanquée de deux corps de casernes; vis-à-vis la place, s'élève l'église paroissiale, entre le presbytère et la prison. La maison du commissaire-ordonnateur avoisine celle du Conseil, derrière les casernes, du côté de la rue de Toulouse. L'hôtel du gouverneur, à égale distance de la Place d'Armes et de la poudrière, se situe dans «l'île» bornée par les rues Saint-Louis et Conti. Les citadins adorent la fraîcheur des arbres; ils en ont planté partout. Le long du fleuve, depuis le Détour à l'Anglais[47] jusqu'à dix lieues environ au-dessus de la capitale, règne une levée que vient lécher, à l'époque des crues, l'eau gonflée du Mississipi; sur cette construction soigneusement entretenue et «aussi unie qu'une table», roulent les carosses et les berlines des promeneurs. De vastes plantations entourent la ville.[48]

Dans ce «séjour enchanté», vit une population composée de huit à neuf cents blancs, de trois cents nègres et des 180 soldats de la garnison.[49] Les Créoles sont de belle race: grands, bien faits et braves, i[illegible]ommes ont en société de fort bonnes manières; quant aux femmes, ne connaissant «d'autre devoir à remplir que celui de plaire», elle s'en acquittent, assure-t-on, avec un charme infini.[50] Elles font admirer leur grâce et leurs «Etoffes d'or & de Velours»; mais on les dit peu sérieuses: de dévotes, confie une religieuse, «un Révérend Père Capucin nous assura l'autre jour qu'il n'y en avoit pas une dans tout le païs, ny aux environs».[51] Ainsi, tout n'est point parfait dans la «Métropole» louisianaise. Si les jeunes filles reçoivent aux Ursulines une excellente éducation étayée par une forte instruction – elles apprennent le latin,[52] – les garçons n'ont pas encore d'école au milieu du XVIII[e] siècle, malgré les demandes répétées, auprès du gouvernement français, de Bienville, de Salmon et des Jésuites, à qui l'on inderdit de servir autrement qu'en qualité de missionnaires.[53] La Basse-Louisiane a beau se déve-

lopper, elle ne possède encore, en 1745, «aucun moulin ny machine pour moudre le grain, on est obligé de le piler dans des mortiers de bois».[54] A la lisière des quartiers élégants de la capitale, s'ouvrent des bouges où des nègres affranchis donnent refuge aux malfaiteurs.[55] Un jeu d'enfer se déchaîne dans les tripots qui surgissent aux quatre coins de la ville: impossible de pincer les coupables, ils «ne jouent jamais deux jours de suite dans le même endroit».[56] Les cabarets borgnes prolifèrent.[57] Les ardents Créoles et les officiers oisifs s'échauffent vite. Vite, ils tirent l'épée ou abattent la canne. Et ils se montrent ailleurs que dans les salons.

Vaudreuil raconte l'histoire de l'enseigne Meric, qu'il a dû mettre aux arrêts «pour avoir mené une vie crapuleuse avec des Negres Et des Boemiens»; relâché, l'officier s'est repris «a vivre dans sa Crapule» jusqu'au jour où son empressement à poursuivre une femme – l'épée à la main – l'a de nouveau conduit au cachot.[58] Il pourrait aussi rapporter, s'il s'en souciait, les hauts faits de son protégé,[59] le capitaine de Membrède, rude gaillard qui mène une vie familiale plutôt animée. La femme de Membrède se plaint d'être battue et elle obtient la séparation. Appelé devant le Conseil Supérieur, le capitaine s'explique le plus tranquillement du monde: madame de Membrède refuse de porter le «joug» du mariage, elle n'a pas la moindre idée de l'obéissance qu'elle doit à son mari; quant à la bosse qui tuméfie le visage de la malheureuse, ce n'est pas un coup de poing, comme elle le prétend, qui l'a fait pousser, c'est la curiosité: l'officier s'entretenait dans ses appartements avec un ami lorsque, sortant de la salle, il ouvre la porte, qui va donner contre la figure de sa femme, tout à la conversation qu'elle épiait.[60] Il arrive que l'on se batte en duel.[61] Un matin de 1743, on trouve dans la rue le cadavre d'un habitant.[62] A ces derniers, les mésaventures ne manquent pas plus qu'aux officers. Voici Pierre Hardy, malicieusement surnommé la Vierge; il a épousé une veuve qui commence par le quitter, qui lui cambriole ensuite sa maison, l'assomme à demi avec une bûche et le fait rosser par le fils de son premier mari[63] Le cortège des plaideurs éclopés n'en finit plus de défiler devant le Conseil.[64] Il suffit d'être un peu au courant des embarquements qui s'opèrent dans les ports de France pour comprendre pourquoi de tels incidents se multiplient: «On dit, cher fils», écrit Mme Bégon à l'ordonnateur Michel, «que l'on envoie beaucoup de canaille dans ton pays.»[65] Au fond, ce turbulent pays a surtout le défaut d'être jeune. Vaudreuil le reconnaîtra: «Il demande encore, observera-t-il, a estre traitté Comme une Colonie Naissante.»[66]

2. LA COLONIE EN 1742

Avant de prendre contact avec la Louisiane, le nouveau gouverneur est mis au fait de la situation de celle-ci par de volumineuses instructions.[67] Il l'apprend tout de suite, des crises d'une exceptionnelle gravité ont marqué chaque étape de l'histoire de la colonie. Née au milieu de difficultés incroyables,[68] soumise à des expériences presque toutes malheureuses, la province s'est vu, jusqu'à ces derniers temps, refuser des institutions stables et une administration cohérente. En 1712, voici qu'elle tombe dans le sac d'un manieur d'argent sans vues, Antoine Crozat, pour rebondir, cinq ans après, entre les mains d'un manieur de crédit qui a trop de vues, John Law. C'est le régime extravagant de la Compagnie des Indes.[69] Le massacre des Natchez survient en 1729.[70] Deux ans plus tard, à bout d'expédients, le roi se laisse «rétrocéder» le pays. La politique indigène édifiée par Bienville s'est décomposée: la guerre des Natchez a entraîné la guerre des Chicachas, qui menace d'avoir pour répercussion une guerre des Chérakis.

Vaudreuil connaît d'avance ses attributions; elles ne diffèrent en rien de celles que le gouvernement métropolitain commet à tous les officiers supérieurs qu'il place à la tête de ses colonies. Elles embrassent

> «cinq objets principaux, la Religion, la Justice, la police, ce qui regarde le Militaire, et le gouvernement des sauvages».

Le ministre de la Marine ne s'attarde guère aux deux premiers «objets». Il recommande à son subalterne de donner le bon exemple, d'empêcher les ordres religieux de se quereller, de prêter main-forte à l'exécution de la justice et de laisser une entière liberté aux magistrats.

Dans le vocabulaire de l'époque, «police» générale signifie administration. Le gouverneur en partage la direction avec le commissaire-ordonnateur, fonctionnaire dont le rôle correspond à celui d'un intendant. Trois domaines relèvent de la police: la population, l'agriculture et le commerce. Le peuplement, semble-t-il, est l'affaire de la Cour, qui se contente de prescrire à son représentant «d'engager de bonne heure les garçons et les filles au mariage» et d'attirer de nouveaux habitants «par la douceur et la sagesse de son Gouv[ernem]ent».

L'agriculture et le commerce intéressent davantage le ministre. Il en profite pour brosser à larges traits un tableau des ressources naturelles et des conditions économiques du pays. Si la culture du blé, familière aux Canadiens et aux Français, s'est révélée impraticable en Basse-Louisiane, – on tire d'ailleurs des Illinois tout le blé qu'on veut[71] – il convient, en revanche, de favoriser celle du riz, denrée qui vient assez abondamment pour satisfaire à la consommation locale et pour fournir à l'exportation.[72] Des essais infructueux n'ont pas écarté l'espoir de produire du sucre: on finira par y réussir.[73] L'indigo devrait rapporter beaucoup à la colonie, mais seuls les grands planteurs, disposant de forts capitaux et de nombreux esclaves, peuvent se livrer à cette exploitation payante.[74] Il en va autrement du tabac, qu'un habitant peut cultiver avec deux ou trois nègres; aussi la Cour considère-t-elle cette plante comme la «principale ressource» des colons. Il pousse en Louisiane de fort beau coton, mais d'une variété différente de celle des Antilles; tant que, faute de moulins adaptés à cette variété, on se verra réduit à l'égrener à la main, il faudra renoncer à le produire sur une grande échelle.[75] Assez communs, les mûriers font souhaiter l'élevage du ver à soie; il s'élabore à ce sujet des projets étonnants d'ingéniosité.[76] Au rebours de l'agriculture canadienne, qui ne donne rien que la France ne possède déjà, la Louisiane offre à la métropole les denrées dont celle-ci a besoin. C'est pourquoi la Cour oriente sa production non pas en vue d'une économie de subsistance, mais dans le sens de l'exportation. Ici, l'agriculture, c'est déjà le commerce.

Le commerce, enchaîne Maurepas, «c'est . . . le moyen le plus certain pour l'augmentation de la colonie». Pourquoi? Parce que seul il peut intéresser la France à l'œuvre coloniale. Depuis le début du siècle, la France possède une doctrine: une colonie «n'est bonne qu'autant qu'elle peut estre utile au Royaume».[77] Avec le temps, cette assertion devient un axiome. Toutefois une colonie ne saurait jouer son rôle dans la vie impériale sans la sollicitude constante de la mère-patrie. Un commissaire-ordonnateur en fait la réflexion:

> «Les colonies ne doivent être regardées, dit-on, qu'autant qu'elles sont utiles à l'Etat, cela est certain, mais ce doit être de l'établissement des

> colonies, du nombre et de l'industrie de leurs habitans, de leurs cultures et productions que doit provenir principalement cette utilité, de manière qu'il en resulte un avantage reciproque entre l'Etat et les colonies.»[78]

Le gouvernement français le comprend jusqu'à un certain point: jusqu'au point où il s'agit de choisir entre les intérêts immédiats et les intérêts à longue portée. La France verse des primes aux armateurs qui envoient des navires en Louisiane, elle paie aux producteurs coloniaux des prix qui équivalent parfois à des primes, elle exempte de certains droits de douane ce qui vient du Mississipi; tout cela est bien. D'autre part, dans son désir de plaire aux négociants français, elle les décharge de l'obligation de transporter outre-mer des engagés: politique à courte vue.

Que les marchés français, celui de la métropole et ceux des îles, soient ouverts à la Louisiane, rien de plus naturel. Cependant la Cour favorise aussi des échanges entre sa colonie et celles de l'Espagne. Depuis 1731, elle encourage les marchands louisianais à nouer des relations avec la Floride, les Antilles espagnoles et surtout le Mexique. Les Espagnols ne l'entendent pas ainsi: de dures expériences l'ont démontré, expédier des cargaisons dans leurs ports, c'est s'exposer à des droits prohibitifs ou à des saisies. Il faudra se contenter d'attirer les caboteurs cubains et mexicains à Mobile et à la Nouvelle-Orléans. Même lorsque la guerre entre la Grande-Bretagne et l'Espagne contraint celle-ci de recourir aux ressources de la Louisiane, les fonctionnaires espagnols n'en accablent pas moins «d'indignités» les exportateurs français.[79] A Vaudreuil de «mettre tout en usage» pour tirer le meilleur parti possible de ces clients intraitables.[80]

Les questions de police risqueraient d'accaparer l'activité du représentant du roi si d'autres problèmes ne revêtaient un caractère d'extrême urgence. La défense du pays et la politique indigène sollicitent son attention d'autant plus vivement qu'ils relèvent de lui seul. La garnison de la colonie se compose de treize compagnies françaises de 50 soldats et d'un détachement de 150 Suisses. Quelles troupes! Des «recrües pitoyables», des nains, des voleurs, «des bouches inutiles a la charge des vivres de la Colonie qui n'en tirera aucun service», ainsi les décrit Bienville.[81] «Des gens ramassés et très souvent des bandits», ajoutera Michel.[82] Malgré un envoi récent de renforts,[83] la mortalité et surtout la désertion – si fréquente qu'il a fallu conclure un cartel avec le poste de Pensacola[84] – ont décimé les effectifs.[85] L'indiscipline est épouvantable: les officiers vivent sur leurs plantations, les sous-officiers tiennent cabaret, les hommes passent leurs jours dans les estaminets et leurs nuits dans les tripots.[86] Quant aux milices, elles manquent d'armes; la Cour se contente de leur envoyer 300 fusils, que les habitants devront acheter. Partout, les fortifications menacent ruine. Prévenus par Maurepas de procéder seulement aux réparations essentielles, Bienville et son collègue Salmon prévoient, pour la première année, des travaux qui iront à 310,000 livres. Que l'on suspende tout, ordonne alors le ministre, et que l'on se borne à mettre à l'abri d'un coup de main les ouvrages de Mobile et ceux de la Balise, en bas de la capitale.[87] Programme modeste, à la vérité. C'est pourtant le même Maurepas qui, en annonçant à Bienville la nomination d'un successeur, a jugé prudent de faire chiffrer cet avertissement:

> «La situation des affaires generales pouvant changer d'un jour a l'autre, le Roy desire qu'en attendant l'arrivée de M. de Vaudreüil vous redoubliés de soins et d'attention pour mettre la Colonie a l'abri de toute

surprise.»[88]

Le secrétaire d'Etat fait allusion à la tension qui gagne l'Europe. Il éprouverait peut-être des alarmes plus vives encore s'il connaissait les sentiments que les gouverneurs des colonies anglaises entretiennent à l'égard de la Louisiane.[89]

La Louisiane est mal défendue. Plus que sur ses troupes, elle a toujours compté sur son système d'alliances avec les sauvages. Précisément, sa politique indigène sombre dans la confusion. Oeuvre de Bienville, mais gâchée en son absence, elle n'a pu être redressée par son créateur. La reconstituer, voilà le travail capital qui s'impose à Vaudreuil. Et ce travail ne peut pas attendre. Tout, l'insécurité des établissements et des voies de communication, le désordre des finances, la hausse des prix, l'insuffisance du ravitaillement et les querelles qui paralysent l'administration, tout est déterminé ou aggravé par les troubles qui ont détérioré les relations avec les sauvages. Le nouveau gouverneur réussira-t-il là où son prédécesseur a échoué? La Cour veut croire qu'il y parviendra «aisément». Faute de détails récents, elle doit s'en tenir à des directives d'ordre général: mettre à profit la faiblesse relative des Chicachas, que les Chactas ne cessent de harceler; décourager les Chérakis, dont l'attitude paraît au moins suspecte, de faire incursion dans la colonie; contenir dans la neutralité les Alibamons et les Kaouitas, peuplades assez bien disposées encore, mais travaillées par les Anglais;[90] enfin, ne pas chercher à rétablir le prestige des Français par une campagne militaire de grand style, «de semblables tentatives» n'ayant jamais rien donné. Politique de circonspection, de calculs et d'adresse. A un chef brillant, mais mal servi, la Cour désire substituer un diplomate prudent et formé de longue main à l'art du commandement. Les instructions du nouveau gouverneur se terminent sur ces mots:

> «Les connoissances qu'il a déjà acquises du genie des sauvages et de leur gouvernement ne permettent pas de douter qu'il ne remplisse à la satisfaction de Sa Majesté cette partie importante de son administration.»

Notes

1. Guy Frégault, *Iberville le conquérant* (Montréal, 1944), 337.

2. Vaudreuil à Maurepas, 12 février 1744, AC, C 13A, 28: 211.

3. A. S. Le Page du Pratz, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, (3 vol., Paris, 1758), 2: 64s [A l'avenir: Le Page du Pratz].

4. Jean-Baptiste Bossu, *Nouveaux voyages aux Indes Occidentales* (2 vol., Paris, 1768), 1: 27 [A l'avenir: Bossu]. Voir aussi Le Page du Pratz, 2: 309.

5. «Etat Présent de la Lousiane Et de Partie de Saint Domingue,» 1749, AC, C 13A, 33: 168.

6. Bossu, 2: 174.

7. Marc de Villiers du Terrage, *La Louisiane. Histoire de son nom et de ses frontières successives (1681-1819)* (Paris, 1929), 53 [A l'avenir: Villiers, *La Louisiane*].

8. Jean Delanglez, *The French Jesuits in Lower Louisiana (1700-1763)* (Nouvelle-Orléans, 1935), 2.

9. Jean Delanglez, éd., «Louisiana in 1717,» *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* [RHAF], 3 (1949-1950): 98, note 5.

10. Villiers, *La Louisiane*, 48.

11. Clarence W. Alvord, *The Illinois Country, 1673-1818* (Springfield, 1920), 190s.

12. *Edits et ordonnances*, 1: 388; le Conseil de Marine à Vaudreuil et à Bégon, 26 août 1717, AC, B 39: 258v-259v.

13. Villiers, *La Louisiane*, 10.

14. Jean Delanglez, éd., «Louisiana in 1717,» RHAF, 3 (1949-1950): 98.

15. Justin Winsor, *The Mississippi Basin. The Struggle in America between England and France* (Boston et New-York, 1898), 232-234.

16. N. M. Miller Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisiana during the French Régime (1699-1763)* (New York, 1916), 30; Pease et Jenison, éd., *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, XII.

17. Peter J. Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile* (Boston et New-York, 1910), 188s.

18. On en trouve une énumération dans «Mémoires sur la Louisiane» [1749?], Bibliothèque Nationale, Collection Joly de Fleury [BN, Joly de Fleury], 1726: 78. La feuille de garde de ce manuscrit porte: «Minute d'un Mémoire en 9 Cahiers par M. Beletrus ancien commis de la Marine à Versailles.» Dès le folio 1, on remarque que le mémoire a été annoté par l'ordonnateur Lenormant; ailleurs on retrouve les idées de celui-ci, *ibid.*, 87-89. Il y a plus: l'auteur, écrivant à la première personne, rapporte des incidents de l'administration de Lenormant, *ibid.*, 143, 144, 145. Si l'ordonnateur n'a pas lui-même tenu la plume, il a très nettement inspiré le rédacteur du document.

19. «Un vaste Païs comme la Louisiane seroit difficile a gouverner s'il n'avoit pas de rivières navigables, par le moyen desquelles on pût avoir une prompte communication d'une de ses extremités a l'autre. Or c'est ce dont la Nature a pourvu la Louisiane abondamment,» Jean Delanglez, éd., «Louisiana in 1717,» RHAF, 3 (1949-1950): 258.

20. Mémoire sur la Louisiane, AC, C 13A, 30: 256-257. En 1745, le total des habitants en état de porter les armes s'établit à 974 hommes, «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 216.

21. «Rien de plus contraire . . . à L'établissement de la colonie et a la population que le libertinage avec les Esclaves et les sauvagesses,» «Mémoire Sur l'administration de la Louisiane,» 1749, AC, C 13A, 33: 156v.

22. *Iberville le Conquérant*, 352-356. En 1712, il a fallu transporter la ville à l'embouchure de la rivière de la Mobile, à une trentaine de lieues plus bas que son emplacement initial, trop exposé aux inondations. Voir «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 62.

23. *Ibid.*, 78; Norman W. Caldwell, *The French in the Mississippi Valley, 1740-1750* (Urbana, Ill., 1941), 36, note 3; Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, 132.

24. Le Page du Pratz, 2: 254s; Bossu, 2: 8s.

25. «Mémoire Sur l'administration de la Louisiane,» AC, C 13A, 33: 156v.

26. «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 74-75; «Mémoire Sur l'administration de la Louisiane,» 1749, AC, C 13A, 33: 153; Bossu, 1: 38s. Voir N. M. Miller Surrey, «The Development of Industries in Louisiana during the French Régime,» *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 9 (1922): 229s. Consulter J. Hanno Deiler, *The Settlement of the German Coast of Louisiana and the Creoles of German Descent* (Philadelphie, 1909), 50, ainsi que la carte publiée *ibid.*, 78. En 1749, les Allemands sont au nombre de 96 hommes, H M LO, 165.

27. Bienville, «Apostille Des officiers des troupes de la Loüisianne,» 15 juin 1740, AC, C 13A, 25: 91; Vaudreuil, «Liste des officiers Majors et des troupes de la Loüisianne,» 1746, AC, D 2c, 51: 196; Maurepas à Vaudreuil, 30 avril 1746, AC, B 83: 316; *id.* à *id.*, 4 novembre 1748, AC, B 87: 265. Il deviendra chevalier de Saint-Louis en 1759, «Liste des officiers de la Louisiane» [1741-1759], AC, D 2c, 4: n. p.

28. «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 163-164; Bossu, 1: 40; Le Page du Pratz, 3: 384; «Mémoire sur L'Etat present des habitants de la Louisianne Relativement au projet d'y Introduire des Negres, et d'en sortir du Tabac,» 1750, AC, C 13A, 34: 393-393v.

29. Le P. Vivier au P. —, 17 novembre 1750, R.G. Thwaites, éd., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (73 vol., Cleveland, 1896-1901), 69: 214. [A l'avenir: JR.]

30. *Ibid.*, 216.

31. Sur l'emplacement du fort Tombeché, voir Hamilton, *Colonial Mobile*, 195 et le «Plan du fort de Tombeché tel qu'il etoit au mois de mars 1737,» reproduit *ibid.*, entre 122-123.

32. «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 23, 75; «Mémoire sur Les Etablissements,» novembre 1747, BN, Fonds français [Mss. fr.], 12224: 272; Le Page du Pratz, 2: 255; Vaudreuil à Rouillé, 24 septembre 1750, AC, C 13A, 34: 272v-275v; Vaudreuil et Michel à Rouillé, 21 mai 1751, AC, C 13A, 35: 29-29v.

33. Le Page du Pratz, 2: 273.

34. Pease et Jenison, *Illinois on the Eve of the Seven Years' War*, XV.

35. Sur l'emplacement de ces villages, voir John W. Monette, *History of the Discovery and Settlement of the Valley of the Mississippi* (2 vol., New-York, 1846), 1: 167; Bossu, 1: 145; [Marcel Trudel], *Collection de cartes anciennes et modernes pour servir à l'étude de l'histoire de*

l'Amérique et du Canada (Québec, 1948), planche 61.

36. Charlevoix, 3: 403.

37. Louis Vivier à ——, 8 juin 1750, JR, 69: 146; Vivier au P. ——, 17 novembre 1750, *ibid.*, 220.

38. Caldwell, *The French in the Mississippi Valley*, 42. Voir Bossu, 1: 145s.

39. Maurepas à Vaudreuil, 1*er* janvier 1744, AC, B 78: 438; Vaudreuil à Maurepas, 6 décembre 1744, AC, C 13A, 28: 248; Vivier au P. ——, 17 novembre 1750, JR, 69: 218.

40. Maurepas à Vaudreuil et à Salmon, 27 octobre 1742, AC, B 74: 662-662v. Voir Alvord, *The Illinois Country*, 209 [cf. Norman W. Caldwell, *The French in the Mississippi Valley, 1740-1750* (Urbana, 1941), 47, n. 71]; F.-Emile Audet, *Les premiers Etablissements français au pays des Illinois*, 196s.

41. «Recensement général du pays des Illinois de 1752,» H M LO, 426.

42. Charlevoix, 3: 440s.

43. Marie-Madeleine Hachard [Soeur Saint-Stanislas, Ursuline] à son père, 24 avril 1728, dans Gabriel Gravier, éd., *Relation du voyage des Dames Ursulines de Rouen à la Nouvelle-Orléans* (Paris, 1872), 89s.

44. Le Page du Pratz, 2: 265; voir aussi le plan reproduit *ibid.*, entre 262-263.

45. «Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana,» LHQ, 13 (1930): 499.

46. En général, deux ponts apparaissent à chaque coin de rue, Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisiana*, 93s.

47. Sur l'origine de ce nom, voir *Iberville le Conquérant*, 313s.

48. Le Page du Pratz, 2: 262, 265s; «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 98, 99, 240; le P. Louis Vivier à ——, 17 nov. 1750, JR, 69: 210, 214. Voir John S. Kendall, «The Pontalba Buildings,» LHQ, 19 (1936): 121; Grace King, *New Orleans the Town and People* (New York et Londres, 1896), 43. Cf. Henry P. Dart, «A Duel in the Dark in New Orleans on March 14, 1747,» LHQ, 13 (1930): 200.

49. «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 78; Le P. Louis Vivier à ——, 17 novembre 1750, JR; 69: 210; Henry P. Dart, «Cabarets of New Orleans in the French Colonial Period,» LHQ, 19 (1936): 579; Charles Gayarré, *Histoire de la Louisiane* (2 vol., Nouvelle-Orléans, 1846-1847), 2: 11. Les chiffres fournis par un déserteur français à Charles Town en 1747, paraissent trop faibles, Caldwell, *The French in the Mississippi Valley*, 36, n. 3.

50. Bossu, 1: 26s.

51. Marie-Madeleine Hachard à son père, 27 octobre 1727, *Relation du voyage des Dames Ursulines*, 29, 37. Voir *ibid.*, 90.

52. L'abbé de L'Isle-Dieu à Maurepas, 12 septembre 1747, AC, C 11A, 89: 252.

53. Voir Delanglez, *The French Jesuits in Lower Louisiana, 1700-1763* (New Orleans, 1935), 287-291; M. L. Riley, «The Development of Education in Louisiana Prior to Statehood,» LHQ, 19 (1936): 607; Maurepas à Vaudreuil et à Salmon, 22 octobre 1742, AC, B 74: 647v.

54. Lenormant à Maurepas, 21 octobre 1745, AC, C 13A, 29: 140.

55. «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 240.

56. Kerlérec à Machault, 18 décembre 1754, cité par Marc de Villiers du Terrage, *Les Dernières Années de la Louisiane française* (Paris, [s. d.]), 52. Voir l'histoire d'un joueur, «Records of the Superior Council of Louisiana,» LHQ, 21 (1938): 889.

57. «Mémoire sur L'Etat present des habitants de la Louisiane,» 1750, AC, C 13A, 34: 394; «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 205s. Voir Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisiana*, 276.

58. Vaudreuil à Maurepas, 15 février 1744, AC, C 13A, 28: 215v.

59. [Vaudreuil], «Liste des officiers Majors et des troupes de la Loüisianne,» 1746, AC, D 2c, 51: 190v; Maurepas à Vaudreuil, 1er juin 1746, AC, B 83: 323v, etc.

60. LHQ, 13 (1930): 663, 680s; 14 (1931): 93, 456, 572, 582s.

61. LHQ, 20 (1937): 1128.

62. LHQ, 12 (1929): 139.

63. LHQ, 16 (1933): 143, 333; 18 (1935): 711.

64. LHQ, 12 (1929): 320, 328, 477, 489; 13 (1930): 507s; 14 (1931): 252; 15 (1932): 668; 16 (1933): 136, 509; 17 (1934): 190, etc., etc.

65. Lettre du 6 juin 1750, RAPQ (1934-1935), 99. Voir *ibid.*, 103, 116.

66. Vaudreuil à Maurepas, 6 janvier 1746, AC, C 13A, 30: 17.

67. «Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'instruction au S. de Vaudreuil Gouverneur de la Province de la Loüizianne,» 22 octobre 1742, AC, B 74: 638-645. Les paragraphes qui suivent sont un commentaire de ce document.

68. Marcel Giraud, «La France et la Louisiane au début du XVIIIe siècle,» *Revue historique*, 204, (1950): 185-208.

69. Sur cette époque, voir le livre capital de Pierre Heinrich, *La Louisiane sous la Compgnie des Indes* (Paris, 1907).

70. Sur cet épisode, voir Jean Delanglez, «The Natchez Massacre and Governor Perier,» LHQ, 17 (1934): 631-641.

71. Lenormant proposera en 1749 de reprendre l'établissement des Natchez, abandonné depuis le massacre, pour y faire du blé. «Mémoire Sur l'administration de la Louisianne,» AC, C 13A, 33: 152-152v.

72. Mais le riz de la Louisiane ne saurait, sur les marchés français, soutenir la concurrence de celui du Levant. «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 186.

73. Voir Joseph Wallace, *The History of Illinois and Louisiana Under the French Rule* (Cincinnati, 1893), 297.

74. Voir «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 172-173; Bossu, 2: 179-181; N. M. Miller Surrey, «The Development of Industries in Louisiana during the French Régime,» MVHR, 9 (1922): 234.

75. Bossu, 2: 181s; «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 174-175.

76. *Ibid.*, 180; «Mémoire pour l'Etablissement des Vers à Soye A La Louisiane,» AC, C 13A, 33: 182-185v.

77. Voir «Mémoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sr de Beauharnois,» 6 mai 1702, AC, B 23: 85; mémoire du roi à Vaudreuil et à Beauharnais, 14 juin 1704, AC, B 25: 118, etc.

78. «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 250.

79. Maurepas à Vaudreuil et à Salmon, 15 novembre 1742, AC, B 74: 684; Bienville à Maurepas, 19 octobre 1743, AC, C 13A, 28: 44v; le chevalier des Echelles à Larnage, 9 novembre 1743, AC, C 9A, 64: n. p.; Bonnaud à Larnage, 29 novembre 1743, *ibid.*; «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 247-249. Voir Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisiana*, 195, 397-403.

80. Mémoire du roi à Vaudreuil et à Salmon, 22 octobre 1743, AC, B 74: 634-635v.

81. Bienville à Maurepas, 28 juin 1736, AC, Moreau de Saint-Méry [F3], 24: 273-273v.

82. Michel à Rouillé, 20 mai 1751, AC, C 13A, 35: 14v.

83. Maurepas à Vaudreuil et à Salmon, 22 octobre 1742, AC, B 74: 646.

84. Louboey à Maurepas, 6 novembre 1745, AC, C 13A, 29: 200.

85. Bienville à Maurepas, 4 février 1743, AC, C 13A, 28: 34, 35.

86. «Mémoires sur la Louisiane,» BN, Joly de Fleury, 1726: 80. Voir Marc de Villiers. *Les Dernières Années de la Louisiane française*, 51.

87. Maurepas à Vaudreuil et à Salmon, 22 octobre 1742, AC, B 74: 647-647v; Bienville à Maurepas, 18 février 1742, AC, C 13A, 27: 42.

88. Lettre du 8 octobre 1742, AC, B 74: 626v.

89. Oglethorpe à Clarke, 22 avril [3 mai] 1743, NYCD, 6: 242; Clarke aux lords du commerce, 19 juin 1743, *ibid.*, 225, etc.

90. Maurepas à Vaudreuil et à Salmon, 22 octobre 1742, AC, B 74: 654v.-655v; Maurepas à Vaudreuil, 27 octobre 1742,

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NEW ORLEANS UNDER FRENCH RULE

By Sarah Searight

The Mississippi Delta was one of the last places to be settled on the eastern seaboard of America and one can still appreciate the obstacles faced by the prospective settlers of the eighteenth century. Approached from the sea, it is a grey-green savanna without horizon or landmarks to help the explorer. The featurelessness of the landscape is occasionally relieved by clumps of shrunken, contorted trees huddled on a bank of shells, but for the most part it is a maze of cane brakes, stagnant water and 'bayous' – a Gallicised Indian word for the narrow waterways that wander hither and thither through the Delta, some of them tributaries of the Mississippi flowing into the sea, others merely tidal reaches. About fifteen miles below New Orleans the land begins to rise; here the marsh and swamp is overgrown with huge, creeper-entwined trees, until recently the inaccessible breeding ground of millions of mosquitoes. An Ursuline nun sailing up-river to New Orleans in 1726 – a week's journey – described how she and her companions were obliged to camp an hour before sunset every night to escape the attacks of mosquitoes which *'les uns et les autres piquent sans misèricorde et leurs piqueures sont très mauvaises'*, while their nights were disturbed by the noises of exotic creatures in the undergrowth –*'serpans, couleuvres, scorpions, crocodiles, vipères, tacqs, crepeaux'*– not the most comforting of environments.

A Spaniard, Hernando de Soto, discovered the Mississippi in 1541, but further exploration was postponed for over a century: Spanish energies were concentrated on consolidating her American possessions elsewhere, the English on settling the Atlantic seaboard and the French on religious and civil war at home. In 1673 a Jesuit priest in Canada, Père Marquette, and a fur-trader, Louis Joliet, sailed down the Mississippi as far as Arkansas. Nine years later, acting on their information, another Canadian, Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, travelled down the river to the mouth in the hopes of establishing a French colony that would be in a position to prey upon Spanish treasure fleets in the Gulf, raising the French flag a few miles up the Delta and proclaiming all the lands through which he had passed as belonging to France – Louisiana, in honour of Louis XIV. . .

In 1684 he returned to the Gulf with a larger expedition to establish a settlement about a hundred miles inland, but the shifting sands and horizons of the Gulf shore misled him and he never found the mouth of the river, landing instead in Texas, where he was soon afterwards murdered by mutinous companions.

The strategic position of such a colony was lost upon no one. 'Should the French settle at the disemboguing of the river Mississippi, they would not be long before they made themselves master of that rich province, which would be an addition to their strength very terrible to Europe,' wrote an Englishman of the period. Ten years later, a French expedition under the command of the Canadian, Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, set out for the Gulf, reaching the Mississippi only just in time to forestall an English settlement. Iberville's brother Jean-Baptiste, Sieur de Bienville, was exploring the river in a couple of canoes and on one occasion rounded a bend to find himself face to face with an English ship and expedition also investigating possible sites. Bienville cooly informed the captain, Lewis Bank, that a French fleet was just out of sight and that, anyway, the river was not the Mississippi, whereupon the English turned and sailed out into the Gulf again. Iberville eventually placed his colony on the Gulf coast east of the Delta, better placed in relation to the Gulf than up the river but an unsavoury site, battered by the terrible summer storms of the area, decimated by disease and deprivation. 'Decidedly this colony is a monster without head or tail and its government is a shapeless absurdity,' wrote one of its governors, Cadillac, some fifteen years later.

In 1717 the Louisiana charter was sold by the Crown to the Company of the West, founded by John Law, a Scotsman remarkable for his vivid financial imagination. This Company – later the Company of the Indies –was set up as a subsidiary to Law's *Banque Générale de France*, Law hoping to capitalise on optimistic rumours of fabulous riches in Louisiana. From the colony itself Bienville – Iberville had since died of yellow fever – wrote to suggest moving the colony's headquarters up the Mississippi Delta. Bienville had twice tried to build forts farther down the river than the proposed site, but had noted the latter's advantages when he first sailed up-river in 1699. A narrow waterway, later known as Bayou St. John, ran inland from Lake Pontchartrain, named after the French Minister of Marine, almost to the river, providing a link with the Gulf coast settlements already exploited by a number of Frenchmen who had cleared plantations along the bayou. The site was a few feet above sea level, though well below river-level. It was supposedly more sheltered from storms than the Gulf, though for the first two or three years houses were blown down almost as fast as they were put up. And it had a better harbour – a deep channel ensured by the headlong rush of the river to the sea – than that provided by the shallow waters of the Gulf. Bienville's arguments were sufficiently strong for the Company to be persuaded that a new settlement might inject new life into the flagging fortunes of Louisiana. In 1720, two years after the founding of New Orleans, it dispatched a party of architects and engineers to Biloxi on the Gulf coast to advise Bienville. One of these, Le Blond de la Tour, drafted plans for the new town and another, Adrian de Pauger, went off to the site to see to their execution.

Little remains of French New Orleans, as the settlement was known, except for the layout. This divided the cleared area into forty blocks – five deep and eight in length along a bend in the river, enlarged after the 1722 hurricane to seven and eleven, thereby completing the so-called crescent which has given its name to New Orleans ever since. Each block was divided into five lots and developers of each lot were instructed to surround it with a palisade, leaving sufficient space between the palisade and the street for a *banquette*, a little levee or dike which served as a pave-

ment, and a drainage ditch as somewhat ineffectual protection against flood. One early visitor, Father Charlevoix, described the plan as 'very handsome and very orderly', but 'it will not be as easy to carry out as it has been to put on paper'. In spite of his disappointment at the celebrated colony's appearance in 1722 he declared – with an optimism worthy of Law himself – that 'this wild and deserted place... shall one day... become the capital of a large and rich colony. Rome and Paris had not such considerable beginnings, were not built under such happy auspices and their founders met not with the advantages on the Seine and the Tiber which we have found on the Mississippi in comparison with which these two rivers are no more than brooks.'

Few of the two hundred or so inhabitants would have agreed with Charlevoix's enthusiasm at that time. An early water-colour of the settlement shows an untidy village, cramped on three sides by jungle and swamp and on the fourth by the Mississippi on which Indians in glorious war-apparel are prancing in boats: although New Orleans was never in fact attacked by Indians, the colony's relations with the local tribes were seldom good and, after the massacre of the French garrison of Fort Rosalie in Natchez country in 1729, New Orleans was constantly on the alert against a similar attack. The French Regent, the Duke of Orleans, would not have been flattered had he seen the ramshackle settlement his protégé, Law, had named after him; the grandiose street names, recalling various branches of the Bourbon family and their household saints, were ill-suited to muddy unpaved tracks. The houses, one storey for the most part, raised slightly off the ground because of floods, were wooden or a mixture of wood and brick. Few had glass in the windows; Governor Perier, writing to the Company in 1726 for crates of pane glass, said: 'every six months we have to change the linen cloths that are put on the windows because they rot.' The colony was dependent on supplies from France for the smallest necessities of life.

It is not surprising that Law had the greatest difficulty in persuading people to emigrate in spite of his propaganda; the vast hinterland of Louisiana remained largely unoccupied until the beginning of the nineteenth century and the reluctant few in New Orleans were loth to leave its relative security. After the crash of his Mississippi Bubble in 1720, disenchantment with Law extended to his colony and his Louisiana Paradise became a 'vile compound of marshes, lagoons, swamps ... peopled with every monster of the natural and mythological world.' Religious nonconformists, such as the settlers of the Atlantic seaboard, were barred from Louisiana and the Company met its colonising obligations by forcible recruitment from the prisons and brothels of France. 'The people who are sent here are miserable wretches, driven from France for real or supposed crimes or bad conduct,' wrote Charlevoix; everyone 'considers the country as a place of exile. Everything there disheartens them; nothing interests them in the progress of a colony of which they are members in spite of themselves, and they are very little concerned with the advances which may procure to the State.' Between 1717 and 1721, over half the women sent to Louisiana were prostitutes. The only settlers determined to make a success of their gamble were some Germans who found even Louisiana preferable to their war-devastated lands and from their plantations a few miles up-river from New Orleans, appropriately known as the Côte des Allemands, were soon supplying the town with the fresh food it so desperately lacked.

Such a population was hardly conducive to good government. New Orleans' long history of maladministration had a good grounding during the French period. The titular ruler was the King of France and his Minister of Marine. In the colony itself government was in the hands of the Superior Council which moved its deliberations from Biloxi to New Orleans in 1722. Membership of the Council varied – there were as many as nineteen members in 1748 – but always included the Governor, the Treasurer or Intendant who was also president of the Council, and the Attorney General – most of these generally appointed from France. Ideally the Council was a check on the Governor; as the man responsible for the colony's finances the Intendant, for instance, was often more powerful than the Governor, and Bienville during his first governorship from 1720 to 1723 was frequently at loggerheads with the Intendant, de la Chaise, appointed from France.

From 1723 to 1732 the Council was suppressed and Bienville's replacement as Governor, Perier, was able to effect several administrative reforms. Bienville returned to New Orleans as Governor in 1733, his second administration plagued by Indian troubles which he never succeeded in settling satisfactorily and by the settlers who refused to work towards the self-sufficiency that was essential to the colony's well-being. In 1742 he was succeeded by the Marquis de Vaudreuil, a Versailles courtier who went on to become Governor of Canada. Vaudreuil's administration was notoriously corrupt, but the glamour of his 'little Versailles' impressed visitors into writing enthusiastic accounts of New Orleans which it was certainly in need of. Historians, beguiled by the Creole society that was later to become such a legend, are inclined to commend Vaudreuil for bringing a ray of sequined sunshine into the otherwise cheerless lives of the inhabitants, but the precarious economy of the colony inevitably suffered. Vaudreuil's successor, Kerlerec, corrected some of the abuses, particularly in the buying of offices and the distribution of provisions – the two principal sources of patronage – not without opposition, however, and an army plot in 1759 to upset his administration diverted much of his attention until his retirement in 1762.

But New Orleans survived in spite of the corruption, the lack of interest – moral and financial – of the home government and the physical obstacles to settlement in the Mississippi Delta. The character of the population improved. No more prostitutes were sent to the colony after 1723 for the very good reason that, as Perier complained, no one would accept responsibility for their offspring and the Company was obliged to take on the charge. Instead, Louis XV paid for the despatch of *filles des cassettes*, so called from his gift to each of a dowry, girls of apparently irreproachable upbringing who were allotted husbands on arriving in New Orleans. The Company was responsible for the propagation of Christianity as well as of future settlers. Jesuits from Canada were already at work among the Indians and Capucins since 1724 among the population of New Orleans. 'Since they will experience great difficulty in establishing the spirit of religion in hearts so ill-disposed,' the Bishop of Québec, in whose diocese New Orleans lay, wrote to the Company, it must be prepared to support them and the Company despatched each monk to New Orleans with a supply of wine, meat, flour and 'twenty-five pounds of large beans, eight pounds of Holland or Gruyère cheese, twenty-four pounds of candles, one and a half pounds of pepper, twenty pots of vinegar, twenty-five pounds of salt and twelve pounds of oil' – an indication of what was

scarce in the settlement.

The fathers were very depressed by what they found: 'almost all the inhabitants live in the most scandalous conditions, and in such a profound ignorance of the truths of our holy religion that they may be said to be ignorant even of the first elements.' A church was completed in 1726, just in time for the arrival of Ursuline nuns . . . The nuns played an important part in the raffish society of early New Orleans. In addition to their initial duties as chaperones, they sheltered the unwanted offspring of Perier's prostitutes and opened a school for French, Indian and slave girls. They also worked as nurses in the hospital that adjoined their convent and later in the charity hospital founded in 1736 from a sailor's bequest. The convent was completed in 1734; the present building, perhaps the only one in New Orleans to survive from the French period, dates from 1754, built after the earlier one had failed to withstand the humid climate.

The bad temper which characterised the secular administration of the town also emerged in the bitter rivalry that developed between Capucins and Jesuits over the former's monopoly of religious practice in New Orleans. In 1726 the Capucins had to surrender their 'spiritual care of the savages' outside New Orleans and its immediate surroundings to the Jesuits who had the financial and human resources to proselytise in the wilderness. The same year the Jesuit leader, Father Beaubois, bought a house in New Orleans where Jesuits, arriving from France or returning from Indian missions, could stay. This the Capucins considered as assault on their religious privileges in the town. The fact that it was Beaubois, who on an earler visit to France arranged for the Ursulines to come to New Orleans and on their arrival acted as their chaplain and thence of the hospital, did nothing to allay Capucin fears which soon became part of the factional strife of the Superior Council. Not until the expulsion of the Jesuits from Louisiana in 1763—after the order had been disbanded in France—was the quarrel healed, when the Capucins offered shelter to their homeless rivals while they awaited passages back to Europe.

Beaubois bought a plantation just outside the town at the same time as he bought the town house. Thanks to hard work and careful cultivation, the stretch of land became an example of what could be achieved on the rich alluvial soil of the river lands—one of the richest plantations in the colony. By the 1760's an English visitor, Philip Pittman, found a continuous line of plantations for forty miles above New Orleans either side of the river. Other plantations had already spread along the Bayou St. John, linked with the town by a road winding through the swamps: '*ces eaux dormantes et livides fourmillent de reptiles,*' wrote a poetically-inclined Frenchman about 1760; '*elles sont ombragées de hauts arbres pressés et mutilères, recouverts lugubrement . . . d'une plante parasite* [*Spanish moss*] [*qui*] *imprime à ces lieux sauvages un caractère étrange de tristesse.*'

Much of the improvement in cultivation was due to the growing number of slaves imported into the colony mainly from West Africa—a nearer source of supply, the French colony of Santo Domingo, was discouraged by the authorities because of the prevalence of voodoo practices. About five hundred slaves were imported in 1719 and a slave 'corral' and market were built on the opposite side of the river which became known as Algiers, presumably because of the notoriety of the North African city for its slave markets. A *Code Noir* regulating to the smallest

detail the lives of negroes, free or slave, in the colony was enacted in 1724, along the lines of that on Santo Domingo. Free negroes began to supply the much-needed manual skills of carpentry, building and so on while the negro slaves built up the agricultural prosperity of the colony.

New Orleans itself was also improving. Ten years after its foundation, one of the Ursuline nuns was impressed on her arrival by the fact that most of the inhabitants were wearing velvet and damask clothes while subsisting on a diet of hominy, a kind of semolina made from Indian corn. By the 1750's the diet had improved – thanks to Vaudreuil's extravagances – and a French soldier, Captain Bossu, was so impressed by the inhabitants as to describe them, not entirely accurately, as 'very brave, tall and well made; they have many dispositions for the arts and sciences... the merchants, tradesmen and strangers who live here enjoy as it were an enchanted abode, rendered delicious by the purity of its air, the fertility of its soil and the beauty of its situation.' In fact these inhabitants, by now about three thousand of them including slaves, were only just beginning to enjoy a modicum of economic stability and comfort in what many still considered little better than exile. The houses were better suited to the climate, the food supply had improved and flood risk was diminished with the construction of a levee along the river.

As far as the home government was concerned, however, the colony had proved a dismal failure, a drain on resources rather than the source of the raw materials that Europe expected its colonies to provide. Moreover, France lacked the manpower to withstand the pressure of Britain's expanding seaboard colonies on the great plains west of the Appalachians. The Treaty of Paris, which ended the Seven Years' War in 1763, marked the end of French dreams of American empire for the present; France was obliged to surrender to the British her Canadian possessions and all French territory east of the Mississippi except the 'island' of New Orleans. A year earlier this had been given to Spain in a secret treaty, together with French possessions west of the river, as compensation for her losses as a French ally.

In spite of rumours, the news of the cession was not released in the colony for another three and a half years, during which French officials continued to govern it. The nonchalance with which France abandoned Louisiana was generally reflected in the colony's relatively passive acceptance of the news; the rebels against Spanish rule of 1768 were those few planters and members of the Superior Council who felt their authority and growing economic and political independence was obvious enough to be threatened by the new rulers. One of the more prosperous merchants of New Orleans, Jean Milhet, was delegated by the Council to plead their cause in France in 1765 with no success in spite of the support of the aged Bienville. The arrival in New Orleans of the Spanish Governor, Antonio de Ulloa, in March 1766, seemed to leave no hope for continued French rule.

Ulloa, an eminent scientist and geographer, was ill-suited to discuss the issues with the dissident colonists. It was to Aubry, the acting French Governor, rather than to the Superior Council that he turned to execute the economic regulation of the colony, thereby unconsciously driving at his principal opponents. The uprising, when it came in October 1768, was marked by a lethargic bloodlessness; Ulloa was as unenthusiastic about New Orleans as were the inhabitants about him and he escaped to Havana aboard a

Spanish frigate, leaving the Council in charge.

Spanish dilatoriness in taking over the colony may have led the dissidents to believe they could repudiate the new authority, but there was little hesitation behind Spanish reactions to the repudiation. Alejandro O'Reilly, an Irish soldier in the service of the King of Spain, was already on his way to Havana and was diverted to New Orleans where he arrived six months after Ulloa's departure. Popular support for the rebels disappeared in the face of the Spanish soldiery and two weeks later O'Reilly arrested the leaders of the uprising. Five of them were executed after a short trial and the rest sentenced to exile or short terms of prison. '*Borné et sanguinaire*,' wrote one observer of O'Reilly; 'demonstrating his perfidious cruelty,' said another and O'Reilly is harshly treated by many historians today. In the light of contemporary law, however, the rebels could hardly have expected clemency and most of them escaped remarkably lightly.

The history of French New Orleans is far less glamorous than later descriptions of the city's Gallic atmosphere and ancestry would lead one to believe. Climatically, and in its politics and economics, the town had little to offer during its infancy and its inhabitants had none of the religious or political inspiration of the Atlantic colonies to help them in their struggle against the odds. Strategically, however, the town was soon to prove vital to the development of continental America; within ten years of the Spanish acquisition of New Orleans the great westward expansion of the colonies would begin and the economic prosperity of the new pioneers would largely depend on exporting their agricultural produce down the Mississippi past New Orleans. Within thirty years of the failure of the uprising which hoped to prolong French rule in the colony, the French government would be contemplating ways and means to regain its control and thereby control of American development. For the same strategic reasons, the Americans were to resist that policy to the point of buying Louisiana for themselves.

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LES PROBLEMES D'INSTALLATION DES ACADIENS EN LOUISIANE AU XVIII^{e} SIECLE

Par Jacqueline Voorhies

Entre 1764 et 1769 plusieurs centaines d'Acadiens qui venaient de Saint-Domingue et des colonies anglaises vinrent se réfugier en Louisiane. Leur nombre, leur arrivée inattendue et subséquemment leur établissement dans la colonie, à une époque où celle-ci se trouvait aux prises avec de sérieuses difficultés politiques, financières et sociales, ne firent qu'aggraver une situation déjà fort compromise. Quelle était cette situation et dans quelle mesure allait-elle affecter et influencer l'installation de ces premiers Acadiens dans la province?

Au lendemain de la guerre de Sept ans, la France défaite se trouva dépossédée de la presque totalité de ses colonies dans l'Amérique Septentrionale. Le Canada et tous les territoires à l'est du Mississipi (sauf l'île d'Orléans) avaient été cédés à la Grand-Bretagne, alors que la Louisiane, c'est-à-dire la région à l'ouest du fleuve avait été offerte à l'Espagne à l'occasion du traité secret de Fontainebleau signé en 1762.[1]

La nouvelle de la cession à l'Espagne n'atteignit la colonie qu'en octobre 1764 pour y jeter un désarroi général.[2] A la consternation publique allait s'ajouter une situation politique, administrative et financière des plus ambiguës. Comme l'Espagne n'était nullement pressée de prendre possession de son nouveau territoire, l'administration française se vit dans l'obligation de continuer à gouverner la province.[3] L'arrivée des premiers Acadiens coïncidait avec cette période d'intérim lorsque chaque décision devait être doublement pesée et justifiée. La situation était des plus épineuses et en outre compliquée par la présence des Anglais sur la rive gauche du fleuve ainsi que par les continuelles démarches pour apaiser les nations Sauvages. De plus, la colonie était dans un bien triste état avec ses bâtiments en ruine, ses magasins démunis de tout et son trésor presque à vide. Au cours des années, en dépit de ses ressources naturelles, la Louisiane avait été incapable de se suffire à elle-même. Les obstacles naturels, les projets de colonisation mal conçus, une technologie rudimentaire, avaient fortement préjudicié le progrès de la colonie. La population lente à se développer n'avait tiré que de très maigres résultats d'une agriculture de subsistence. Obligés d'importer la majorité des produits manufacturés, la Louisiane était presque entièrement dépendante de la métropole. En dépit de nombreuses tentatives entreprises par la France pour redresser l'économie du pays, un système monétaire déficiant, des traffics clandestins souvent frauduleux, avaient sévèrement compromis l'état financier de la province. La fièvre de la spéculation avait engendré chez les habitants un esprit séditieux et une certaine paresse.[4] L'arrivée imprévue de près

d'un millier d'Acadiens entre 1764 et 1769 n'allait que compliquer la tâche déjà difficile des administrateurs de la colonie.[5]

Les premiers Acadiens qui vinrent prendre refuge en Louisiane y arrivèrent en février 1764. Ayant probablement profité d'une des clauses du traité de Paris qui permettait aux prisonniers de guerre de rejoindre leur pays d'origine durant une période de dix-huit mois, ils avaient quitté la Nouvelle-York avec le consentement des Anglais. Voyageant à leurs frais, ces premiers Acadiens au nombre d'une vingtaine furent non seulement admis dans la colonie mais secourus sur-le-champ.[6] En 1765, plusieurs centaines d'autres réfugiés acadiens qui venaient surtout de Saint-Domingue les suivirent. Le recensement officiel de la colonie de cette époque indiquait une population acadienne qui se montait à environ sept cents personnes.[7] Entre 1767 et 1768, trois cent cinquante-neuf Acadiens venant principalement des colonies anglaises vinrent renforcer les rangs de leurs compatriotes.[8] En 1769 le bateau anglais *Bretagne* parti du Maryland à destination de la Louisiane et ayant à bord des Anglais, des Allemands et seize familles acadiennes échoua sur la côte du Texas. Détenus plusieurs mois au présidio de Bahia des Espiritu Santo, l'équipage ainsi que les voyageurs furent libérés et les Acadien[illegible] éventuellement envoyés à Natchitoches pour s'y établir.[9]

Bien que nous n'ayons que des détails assez sommaires sur leur arrivée à la Nouvelle-Orléans, nous savons que les réfugiés acadiens débarquaient dans la colonie dépourvus de tout, et pour la plupart, sérieusement éprouvés par les années de captivité, la traversée en mer et les maladies.[10]

Partagés entre l'admiration et la pitié pour des compatriotes, ces malheureuses victimes du Grand Dérangement qui avaient tout risqué pour rester fidèles à leur foi et à leur prince, les administrateurs de la colonie, M. Aubrey, gouverneur, et M. Foucault, commissaire-ordonnateur, firent tout leur possible pour leur donner l'aide nécessaire. Des vivres leur furent distribués et des dédommagements de frais de voyages envisagés.[11] La plupart des Acadiens arrivaient sans argent ou avec des bordereaux de cartes, ordonnances, certificats et autres espèces pécuniaires qui avaient circulé au Canada et qui étaient maintenant périmés. Ils les remirent à M. Foucault dans l'espoir de se les faire rembourser.[12] Tout en déplorant les dépenses et les inconvénients que leur établissement allait occasionner, les Français d'abord et les Espagnols ensuite eurent la sagesse de reconnaître les importantes contributions que ces laborieux fermiers aux familles nombreuses étaient à même d'apporter au développement de la colonie et de sa population.[13]

Le séjour des Acadiens à la Nouvelle-Orléans ne fut que provisoire. Il ne fut jamais question de les garder à la ville, mais bien au contraire de les envoyer à l'intérieur du pays. Des terres proches de la ville furent considérées, mais comme elles s'inondaient facilement et demandaient un gros travail de défrichage, le projet fut abandonné.[14] Après mûre réflexion de la part des administrateurs des dispositions furent prises pour les envoyer à Cabannocé, aux Opelousas et aux Attakapas. Ces deux dernières régions, bien que peu explorées, avaient toutefois la réputation d'avoir d'excellentes vacheries ainsi que des terres riches et fertiles. Une fois défrichées et cultivées, ces terres allaient non seulement subvenir aux besoins des nouveaux colons mais éventuellement fournir tous les vivres nécessaires à la capitale.[15] Pourvus de provisions, d'outils, de médicaments, d'armes, de munitions, etc., pour une période limitée, les Acadiens furent conduits dans leurs établissements respectifs.[16]

La correspondance de M. Aubry et de M. Foucault reflétait un certain optimisme quant à l'avenir de ces établissements. Désireux de justifier les sommes déboursées, ils insistaient surtout sur les aspects positifs de ces nouvelles entreprises de colonisation, qui selon leurs prévisions allaient sous peu devenir considérables.[17]

Des instructions précises qui devaient assurer le bon fonctionnement des postes furent remises aux commandants. Une série de directives touchant à la distribution des vivres, habitations, futures ressources agricoles, milices, litiges, etc., réglaient en détail l'organisation économique, civile et militaire des postes. Des registres énumerant les familles et contenant les noms, âges, naissances, mariages,décès, etc., devaient être compilés, des milices civiles organisées, et les terres délimitées. Des arpenteurs qui avaient accompagné les Acadiens dans leurs établissements avaient été chargés d'en explorer les régions et d'en arpenter les terres. Aux Attakapas, par exemple, où il n'y avait pas encore de poste, des ordres furent donnés à l'arpenteur concernant le choix du lieu par rapport à la rivière et la configuration proprement dite du village. Des terrains devaient être désignés pour les futurs emplacements des habitations, de l'église, du cimetière, du logement du commandant et notables, ainsi que des chemins, et pâturages communs. Tout le pays à l'ouest du village devait être minutieusement exploré, pour la qualité du sol, ses ressources forestières, ses cours d'eau, son potentiel agricole, etc., et un rapport dressé sur tous les aspects du dit village et de ses environs. Des terres qui mesuraient généralement entre quatre et huit arpents faisant face au fleuve ou à la rivière sur la profondeur ordinaire, c'est-à-dire quarante arpents devaient être distribués aux chefs de famille proportionnellement au nombre de leurs enfants et enregistrées sur les rôles.[18]

Une fois les terres réparties, les Acadiens se mirent au travail sans délai. Non seulement devaient-ils défricher ces terres, mais aussi ils devaient les cultiver. De plus, ils étaient à construire des clôtures, des chemins, des fossés et des levées le long des rivières.[19] Dans un pays où la cru des eaux noyait facilement les terres et les éboulait parfois à raison d'un arpent par an, ces travaux déjà très ardus étaient souvent à recommencer.[20] En outre, des abris provisoires et des maisons devaient être construits, ce qui nécessita la coupe du bois, la préparation des pièces de bois, des besognes difficiles vu l'outillage restreint et médiocre qu'ils avaient à leur disposition.[21]

Affaiblis par ces labeurs continuels et inaccoutumés au climat chaud et humide de la Louisiane, les Acadiens tombèrent en proie aux différentes maladies et surtout aux fièvres qui sévissaient dans la colonie. Les chirurgiens royaux attachés aux postes étaient littéralement débordés par le nombre croissant de leurs malades qu'ils étaient obligés d'aller soigner dans leurs habitations. Comme ces habitations étaient fort éloignées les unes des autres et situées pour la plupart le long des bayous, les chirurgiens passaient le plus clair de leur temps à se transporter par pirogue d'une maison à l'autre. En conséquence, les soins qu'ils prodiguaient à leurs malades étaient aussi sommaires qu'ils étaient inefficaces. De concert avec les commandants des postes, les chirurgiens déploraient le manque de médicaments, d'hygiène, d'installations médicales et suggéraient dans leurs lettres à l'administration des améliorations dans le domaine sanitaire et alimentaire.[22]

Au moment où une alimentation nourrissante était essentielle au rétablissement des malades acadiens, ces derniers qui n'étaient pas encore capables de se suffire à eux-mêmes se voyaient réduits à de maigres rations de gru. A Cabannocé en l'occurrence, ils étaient à

la merci d'un système d'approvisionnement mal conçu qui les obligeait d'aller en personne à la ville pour y chercher la farine nécessaire. Une fois revenus au poste, des bons leur étaient distribués qui sur présentation leur donnaient droit à leur part des vivres. Ceux qui étaient alités devaient compter sur la charité des voisins ou tout simplement se passer de nourriture.[23]

Au début de leur installation en Louisiane, la viande, à l'exception peut-être de gibier et de quelques cochons et moutons qu'ils élevaient, ne devait pas figurer pour beaucoup dans leur nourriture quotidienne qui était essentiellement à base de riz et de maïs.[24] Comme l'administration de la colonie ne les avait pas pourvus de bétail, en avril 1765, plusieurs chefs acadiens signèrent un contrat à la Nouvelle-Orléans avec Monsieur Bernard Dauterive qui s'engageait non seulement à leur en fournir, à raison de cinq vaches et un taureau par famille, pendant six années consécutives, mais aussi à remplacer le cheptel perdu au cours de la première année. Au bout de six ans, les Acadiens s'obligeaient à rendre à Monsieur Dauterive un nombre équivalent de bêtes reçues et à partager avec lui le surplus du bétail.[25]

Malgré les nombreuses précautions prisent par l'administration pour alléger l'installation des Acadiens, malgré la sollicitude des commandants des postes qui veillèrent de près à leurs besoins et à leur bien-être, cette installation ne se fit pas sans déboires et contretemps. La volumineuse correspondance des administrateurs nous fait part des difficultés journalières, telles que les intempéries, les inondations, mais surtout des problèmes d'arpentage et de bornoyage des terres concédées. Longeant le cours sineux des rivières, ces terres étaient bien difficiles à délimiter. En conséquence, les habitants demeurant sur les pointes se virent privés d'une partie considérable de leurs propriétés, et un mécontentement général s'ensuivit. En dépit d'un second arpentage et bornoyage des terrains qui en l'occurrence ne donna que de très maigres résultats, les habitants continuèrent à se plaindre.[26] A ces ennuis s'ajoutaient les accidents de chasse et de travail ainsi que les incursions des bêtes sauvages qui menaçaient les habitations, les troupeaux et les récoltes.[27] Ces récoltes faites parfois dans des circonstances défavorables avaient néanmoins donné d'excellents résultats.[28] Les travaux des champs n'étaient pas cependant les seuls travaux auxquels les Acadiens se livraient. Obligés de servir dans des compagnies de milice qui assuraient la défense et la police des postes et au besoin celle de la colonie, ils étaient également chargés d'exécuter des projets pour l'amélioration de leurs établissements.[29] Ceux-ci encore au premier stade de leur développement ne possédaient pas, par exemple, d'édifice religieux. A Cabannocé, lorsque la demeure du commandant s'avéra trop petite pour contentir la foule de dévots venus pour y écouter la messe, la nécessité d'une chapelle devint des plus urgentes. En 1767, sous la direction de son commandant, la milice de Cabannocé fournit le bois, l'argent et la main d'œuvre pour bâtir la première chapelle qui fut consacrée à Saint Jacques et à Saint Philippe. Cette bâtisse provisoire, remplacée plus tard par une église du même nom, était un hangar couvert, entouré de pieux et mesuant quarante pieds de long sur vingt pieds de large.[30] Lorsque la paroisse avoisinante de La Fourche fut créée, une des premières tâches confiées à sa milice fut la construction d'une église, l'église de l'Assomption.[31] Comme les paroisses de Cabannocé et de La Fourche étaient limitrophes et que les bornes qui les délimitaient n'avaient pas été convenablement bornoyées, certains Acadiens habitaient dans l'une des paroisses et servaient de miliciens dans l'autre. Certains Acadiens obligés de contribuer une seconde indemnité pour défrayer les frais d'une cuisi-

ne, d'un cimetière, etc., pour la chapelle de Saint-Jacques s'y refusèrent acrimonieusement. En dépit des injonctions de leurs chefs ils restèrent fermes dans leur refus.[32]

Des curés titulaires pour ces deux paroisses ne furent nommés qu'en 1770.[33] Entre temps, les paroisses furent desservies par des prêtres qui venaient des régions avoisinantes pour dire la messe et faire les baptêmes et les mariages. Ces visites, cependant, n'étaient pas très fréquentes, car les déplacements qui se faisaient le plus souvent par bateaux étaient longs, coûteux et souvent périlleux. La présence des Nations Sauvages aux environs des forts et partout dans la province présentait toujours un potentiel danger aux voyageurs aussi bien qu'aux habitants.[34] En fait, dans tous les établissements certaines précautions avaient été prises en cas d'attaque pour prévenir la population. Un système d'alarme établi au moyen d'un canon avait pour but d'avertir les gens, même les plus éloignés, du danger qui les menaçait.[35] Bien que les Nations Sauvages ne semblent pas s'être attaquées aux Acadiens, ces derniers les craignaient beaucoup.[36]

Lorsqu'en 1767 de nombreux réfugiés acadiens nouvellement arrivés dans la colonie furent envoyés à Saint-Louis de Natchez pour s'y établir, ils ne voulurent pas y rester. Malgré les ménagements dont ils furent l'objet, malgré les concessions, ils se plaignirent de tout. Ils se plaignirent de la qualité du sol, de l'éloignement des habitations et surtout de la proximité des Nations Sauvages qui à leur avis constituait une présence inquiétante pour la sécurité de leurs familles. Ce qu'ils voulaient en fait, c'était d'aller rejoindre leurs parents et amis déjà installés à Cabannocé. A cor et à cris ils demandèrent de s'y faire envoyer.[37] Leur conduite belliqueuse dans cette affaire et les incidents désagréables qui en découlèrent furent sévèrement jugés par le gouverneur de la province, Don Antonio de Ulloa, qui avait vu clair dans leur jeu.[38] En conséquence il fit publier un édit qui défendait aux habitants de la province de se déplacer, d'aller s'installer ailleurs, ou d'héberger quelqu'un sans autorisation. Toute infraction à la règle allait être punie par l'expulsion immédiate de la colonie.[39]

Non seulement les Acadiens finirent par obéir, mais à part quelques cas isolés, ils ne firent aucun effort pour quitter la Louisane.[40] Bien au contraire, ils y attirèrent d'autres. Lorsque Monsieur Aubry dans une de ses lettres au duc de Praslin, écrivant au sujet des Acadiens, affirmait que « . . . la Louisiane allait devenir bientôt une nouvelle Acadie . . .», il ne se trompait pas de beaucoup.[41] La nouvelle des établissements acadiens en Louisiane s'était répandue jusque dans les colonies anglaises. Des Anglais catholiques-romains ainsi que des Acadiens voulurent eux aussi venir s'y établir.[42] En 1769, les seize familles acadiennes qui avaient échouées sur la côte du Texas furent éventuellement envoyées à Natchitoches pour s'y installer. Comme les Acadiens qui avaient été envoyés à Saint-Louis de Natchez ils ne voulurent pas y rester. En dépit de la générosité du commandant et des habitants ils refusèrent de travailler et se contentèrent de vivre d'aumônes.[43] Grâce à leur obstination ils finirent par triompher. En 1770 le gouvernement colonial leur donna la permission d'aller rejoindre leurs familles sur les rives du Mississipi.[44] Les Acadiens de Saint-Louis de Natchez, grâce à un concours de circonstances, avaient également obtenu cette permission l'année précédente.[45] Si les Acadiens trouvèrent en Louisiane une seconde patrie, c'est en partie l'œuvre des administrateurs coloniaux qui avec des moyens réduits, une technologie primitive et des connaissances rudimentaires du pays, eurent la perspicacité, l'initiative et la témérité d'entreprendre une tâche aussi lourde de responsabilités et d'écueils. C'est aussi en partie l'œuvre des Acadiens qui

avec leur ténacité, leur travail et leur flexibilité d'adaptation surent triompher des nombreuses et pénibles épreuves du début. Grâce à leurs efforts combinés, une difficile entreprise de colonisation put s'accomplir. Comme Monsieur Aubry l'avait si bien prévu, les Acadiens se virent renaître à la Louisiane et ils y firent des merveilles.[46] Malgré les peines et les déboires des premiers temps, ils finirent par y trouver ce qui leur était de plus précieux, les éléments nécessaires à la survivance. Isolés dans leurs bayous, entourés de leur familles, ils purent garder leur indépendance ethnique, économique et culturelle. Libre d'exercer leur foi, ils furent à même de préserver leur identité religieuse. Obligés d'obéir aux règles, ils surent s'y plier sans toutefois s'y soumettre. Munis d'armes, ils retrouvèrent leur dignité et leur honneur. Avec leurs terres, leurs habitations et leurs fusils, ils étaient une fois de plus maîtres de leurs propres destinées.

Notes

1. Un excellent compte rendu sur la politique diplomatique et les événements qui menèrent à la cession de la Louisiane aux Espagnols se trouve dans les deux premiers chapitres du livre de E. Wilson Lyon, *Louisiane in French Diplomacy, 1759-1804* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1974). Voir aussi Baron Marc Villiers du terrage, *Les Dernières années de la Louisiane française*, (Paris, 1904), pp. 151-159.

2. Charles Gayarré, *Histoire de la Louisiane*, 2 vols. (Nouvelle-Orléans, 1847), II, 122-125.

3. Lyon, *Louisiana in French Diplomacy*, pp. 39-42. Voir aussi Philippe Aubry au duc de Choiseul-Stainville, 25 février, 1765, Archives Nationales, Archives des Colonies, séries C13a, (Louisiane: correspondance générale), vol. 45, folio 41-42. (cité dorénavent AC, C13a, Vol.: ff)

4. D'Abaddie à Choiseul, 7 juin, 1764, AC, C13a, 44:58-62; Aubry à Choiseul, 24 avril 1765, AC, C13a, 45:47-52; Aubry à Choiseul, 14 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:56-57.

   Ce chiffre d'un millier d'Acadiens est un chiffre tout à fait approximatif. Il est basé sur les recensements de la Louisiane de 1763, 1766 ainsi que les recensements d'Acadiens de 1767, 1768 et 1769. Pour plus de détails sur ces recensements, voir les notes 6, 7, 8 et 9 qui suivent. Pour le total de la 1766 environ 5,560 habitants, voir Archivo General de Indias, Papeles Procedentes de Cuba, Seville, Legajo 187-A-1 (dorénavent cité PPC, Legajo).

6. D'Abbadie à Choiseul, 6 avril 1764, AC, C13a, 44:37-38. D'Abbadie faisant part au ministre de l'arrivée de ces premiers Acadiens demandait qu'une gratification leur soit accordée pour les dédommager de leurs frais de voyage. Ces frais qui se montaient à 550 livres par famille avaient épuisé toutes leurs économies. D'Abbadie ajoutait aussi qu'une ration de riz et maïs leur avait été distribuée.

7. Archivo General de Indias, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Legajo 2595. (dorénavent cité ADS., Legajo) Un recensement partiel de la colonie en date de 1763 mais probablement achevé dans les années qui suivirent contient un recensement des Acadiens arrivés dans la colonie entre 1764 et 1765. Ces Acadiens étaient au nombre de sept cents. Ce chiffre toutefois est tout à fait approximatif.

8. PPC., Legajo 114. Environ 210 personnes venant de Baltimore, Maryland, après une traversée de 78 jours, avec un arrêt de 17 jours à Guarice, arrivèrent en Louisiane en juillet 1767. Après un bref séjour à la Nouvelle-Orléans, ils partirent le 8 août pour Saint-Gabriel d'Iberville et arrivèrent à leur destination le 16 août. Logés au poste, ils attendirent que des terres leurs soient distribuées. Pour les Acadiens qui arrivèrent dans la colonie en 1768, voir ADS, Legajo 2585. Vingt-neuf familles acadiennes représentant un total de 149 personnes, venant du Maryland arrivèrent à la Nouvelle-Orléans en février, 1768, et furent presque aussitôt envoyées à Saint-Louis de Natchez pour s'y établir. Voir aussi Pedro Piernas, «Motifs qu'exposent les Acadiens pour ne pas vouloir s'établir (à Saint-Louis de Natchez) et réponses qui détruisent leurs raisons mal fondées,» 27 mars 1768, PPC, Legajo 2357. Dans ce mémoire Piedro Piernas, officier espagnol, décrivait le bref séjour des Acadiens à la Nouvelle-Orléans. Logés dans un bâtiment du Roi, de l'autre côté du fleuve, vis-à-vis de la ville, les Acadiens reçurent des vivres ainsi que des soins m[illegible]dicaux pour leur nombreux malades et peu après furent envoyés à Saint-Louis de Natchez pour s'y installer.

9. Alexandre O'Reilly à Don Julian de Arriaga; 10 décembre 1769, cité dans Lawrence Kinnaird, ed., *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1945, Spain in the Mississippi Valley, 1765-1794,* 4 vols. (Washington, 1949), II, 135-139. Le vaisseau anglais *La Bretaña* qui avait quitté le Maryland, le 5 janvier 1769 pour la Nouvelle-Orléans, ayant à bord une centaine de passagers anglais, allemands et acadiens, poussé par des vents contraires échoua dans la Baie du Saint-Esprit sur la côte du Texas. Ayant épuisé toutes leurs provisions d'eau et de nourriture, les officiers de *La Bretaña* s'adressèrent au capitaine espagnol Don Francisco Thobar pour obtenir des vivres et un laissez-passer pour se rendre à la Nouvelle-Orléans. En dépit des assurances offertes par les responsables de *La Bretaña,* Don Francisco Thobar fit saisir la goëlette et son chargement et força l'équipage ainsi que les passagers à se rendre à 40 lieux de la côte, à l'intérieur du pays. Là, ils furent détenus et obligés de travailler jusqu'au 11 septembre 1769, lorsque Don Raphael Martinez Pacheco, commandant du fort Cokesaw vint les secourir et les amener à Natchitoches. Les familles anglaises partirent éventuellement pour Pensacole, les Allemands furent envoyés au fort d'Iberville et les seize familles acadiennes restèrent à Natchitoches pour y être établies. Cet établissement toutefois ne fut que provisoire.

10. Aubry à Choiseul, 25 février 1765, AC, C13a, 45:41-42; Nicolas Foucault à Choiseul, 4 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:115; Aubry à Choiseul, 14 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:56-57.

11. Aubry à Choiseul, 25 février 1765, AC, C13a, 45:41-42; Foucault à Choiseul, 28 février 1765, AC, C13a, 45:108; Foucault à Choiseul, 4 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:115; Foucault à Choiseul, 13 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:118-119; Aubry à Choiseul, 14 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:56-57; Aubry et Foucault à Choiseul, 30 avril 1765, AC, C13a, 45:21-24.

12. «Bordereaux de cartes, ordonnances, certificats, déposés par les familles acadiennes réfugiées à la Louisiane,» 1765, AC, C13a, 45:25-28. Cet inventaire des espèces pécuniaires circulant au Canada accompagnait la lettre de Messieurs Aubry et Foucault adressée au ministre du 30 avril 1765. Ces espèces pécuniaires qui se montaient à 33.395 livres et 18 sols avaient été déposées par les Acadiens entre les mains du Sieur Maxent (par l'intermédiaire de Foucault) dans l'espoir de se les faire rembourser. Voir aussi Aubry à Choiseul, 30 septembre 1765, AC, C13a, 45:31-33. Dans cette lettre Aubry annonçait que d'autres familles acadiennes nouvellement arrivées dans la colonie possédaient aussi des espèces pécuniaires et celles-ci avaient été également confiées au Sieur Maxent qui devait faire le nécessaire.

13. Aubry à Choiseul, 25 février 1765, AC, C13a, 45:41-42. Aubry soulignait l'importance du rôle que les Acadiens allaient jouer dans le développement de la colonie. Les Acadiens, écrivait-il « . . . seront nécessaires aux Espagnols quand ils seront arrivés et il sera de leur intérêt de les ménager.» Pour une description élogieuse des Acadiens, voir aussi: Aubry à Choiseul, 14 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:56-57. Aubry à Don Antonio de Ulloa, 16 décembre 1766, PPC, Legajo 187-A-1. Dans cette lettre Aubry dépeignait l'attitude bienveillante des Espagnols envers les Acadiens. Voir aussi Governmental Expenses, 1767, Colony of Louisiana, cité dans Kinnaird, II, 15-19. Pour les dépenses que le gouvernement espagnol comptait faire pour aider les Acadiens, voir Marquis de Grimaldi à Arriaga 13 mai 1767, cité dans Kinnaird, II, 28. Une somme de 25,000 pesos avait été expressément désignée pour secourir les familles acadiennes qui à l'avenir allaient venir s'établir dans la colonie.

14. Aubry à Choiseul, 24 avril 1765, AC, C13a, 45:47-52. Aubry dans sa lettre expliquait qu'il avait fait une coûteuse expérience avec les habi-

tants de la Côte des Allemands; qu'il avait fallu les nourrir pendant plusieurs années pour leur donner le temps de faire les défriches et les levées nécessaires. Les levées étaient des remblais d'une certaine hauteur construits le long du fleuve ou des rivières pour empêcher l'inondation des terres au printemps.

15. *Ibid.* Dans cette lettre, Aubry annonçait aussi qu'il allait établir des Acadiens aux Attakapas, région qui se trouvait à environ 45 lieux de la ville. Voir aussi Foucault à Choiseul, 28 février 1765, AC, C13a, 45:108. Cette lettre annonçait que les autres Acadiens allaient être envoyés dans le district des Opelousas, situé à 60 lieux de la ville. Nous n'avons aucun détail sur le départ des Acadiens pour Cabannocé. Nous savons toutefois que les Acadiens figuraient dans le recensement de Cabannocé de 1766. Pour ce recensement voir ADS, Legajo 2595.

16. Pour une liste détaillée des vivres, munitions et marchandises accordés aux Acadiens qui allaient s'installer à Opelousas voir «Etat des vivres et munitions délivrés aux familles acadiennes réfugiés à la Louisiane», 30 avril 1765, AC, C13a, 45:30. Voir aussi Aubry et Foucault au ministre, 30 avril 1765, AC, C13a, 45:21-24. Dans cette lettre il était question de l'installation des Acadiens aux Attakapas et aux Opelousas ainsi que des provisions qui leur avaient été données. Bien qu'un approvisionnement de six mois leur avait été promis, les Acadiens n'en reçurent que la moitié. Ces frais d'approvisionnement se montaient à 15.500 livres et 10 sols. Les Acadiens qui se rendaient aux Attakapas devaient être accompagnés par le Sieur Andry, ingénieur-arpenteur qui devait faciliter leur installation.

17. Aubry au duc de Choiseul, 14 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:56-57; Foucault au duc de Choiseul, 13 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:118-119.

18. «Copies des instructions pour le Sieur Andry, lieutenant réformé et sous-ingénieur, sur ce qu'il doit observer pour l'établissement des familles acadiennes sur la terre des Attakapas», 17 avril 1765, Archives Nationales, Archives des Colonies (Louisiane: correspondance générale), series F3, vol. 243, f. 23. Pour l'installation des Acadiens à Saint-Gabriel d'Iberville en 1767 voir R. E. Chandler, ed. et traducteur, «End of an Odyssey, Acadians Arrive in Saint Gabriel, Louisiana,» *Louisiana History,* XIV (1973), 69-87. Pour les détails sur l'établissement des Acadiens à Saint-Louis de Natchez en 1768 voir Pedro Piernas, «Motifs qu'exposent les Acadiens pour ne pas vouloir s'établir et réponses qui détruisent leurs raisons mal fondées» 27 mars 1768, PPC, Legajo 2357; voir aussi Pedro Piernas, «Mandement qui sera signifié aux Acadiens qui se trouvent actuellement au fort de Saint-Louis de Natchez au nom de sa Majesté» date illisible, PPC Legajo, 2357-8. Pour la concession des terres vacantes et de leur entretien voir Gayarré, *Histoire de la Louisiane,* pp. 370-371.

19. Louis Judice au (gouverneur), 2 décembre 1767, PPC., Legajo, 187-I-A. Judice à Don Alexandre O'Reilly, 1er avril 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1. Louis Judice commandait une des deux milices de Cabannocé. L'autre était commandée par Nicolas Verret. Lorsque l'influx de réfugiés acadiens obligea l'administration d'ouvrir des concessions dans la région de La Fourche de Tchetimachas, une nouvelle paroisse fut créée 1767-1770. Connu sous le nom de La Fourche, ou Seconde Côte des Acadiens, cette nouvelle paroisse qui avait sa propre milice fut placée sous la direction de Louis Judice. Cabannocé ou la Première Côte des Acadiens resta sous le commandement de Nicolas Verret. Pour de plus amples détails sur les limites de ces deux paroisses qui étaient limitrophes voir Albert Robichaux, ed., et trad., *Colonial Settlers along Bayou Lafourche: Louisiana Census Records, 1770-1789,* (Harvey, 1974), pp. vii-x.

20. Louis du Tisne à Don Unzaga y Amezaga, juillet 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-A-1. Du Tisne qui était

Capitaine de milice à Iberville, écrivait qu'en raison de la cru des eaux, certaines concessions étaient devenues impraticables et en conséquence les habitants avait été obligés de déménager leurs demeures à deux reprises.

21. Nous n'avons pas de détails précis sur la construction des maisons. Nous savons toutefois qu'elles étaient construites en bois. Dans R.E. Chandler «End of an Odyssey,» 70, 74, 81-87, nous apprenons que les Acadiens qui furent envoyés à Saint-Gabriel d'Iberville et qui ne reçurent que des haches pour outils commencèrent par bâtir des abris provisoires en attendant de construire des maisons. Pour une liste plus complète d'outils distribués aux Acadiens voir «Etats des vivres et munitions délivrés aux familles acadiennes réfugiées à la Louisiane», 30 avril 1765, AC, C13a, 45:30. Voir aussi «Note de Ignation Ramon de Ezpeleta», 14 décembre 1769, cité dans Kinnaird, II, 142, pour les outils distribués aux seize familles acadiennes qui en 1769 furent envoyées à Natchitoches pour s'y établir. Cette liste comporte 16 grandes haches, 16 hachettes, 16 pioches, 16 pots en fer, et 16 rabots. Nous n'avons que des détails assez sommaires sur la façon dont le bois était débité en planches. Pour ceci voir Aubry à Ulloa, 9 mars 1767, PPC, 187-A-1. Un moulin à dix scies allait être établi sur une terre proche de la ville et selon Aubry ceci allait être un grand avantage pour les Acadiens qui à l'avenir pourraient y aller pour y acheter des pièces de bois.

22. Judice à Ulloa, 10 juin 1766, PPC, Legajo 187-A-1. Cette lettre faisait part au gouverneur des nombreuses maladies qui sévissaient au poste, de la médiocrité des soins et contenait des suggéstions pour la construction d'une infirmerie. Voir aussi Jacques Leduc, chirurgien du Roi, (au gouverneur), 30 septembre 1767, PPC, 187-A-1; Jacques Leduc, au gouverneur, 14 février 1768, PPC, 187-A-1. Jacques Leduc, chirurgien du Roi à Saint-Gabriel d'Iberville, non seulement donnait des détails sur les malades acadiens, mais suggérait aussi la possiblité d'aménager une infirmerie qui selon lui améliorerait considérablement l'état de sanitation du poste. Voir aussi Jean de la Ville Breuve, commandant à Saint-Louis de Natchez à Duplessis, commandant à la Pointe Coupée, 18 septembre 1768, PPC, Legajo 187-A-2. Monsieur de la Ville Breuve se référant aux ordres du gouverneur concernant les malades acadiens de son poste qu'il ne pouvait faire soigner faute d'épicacuane, annoncait à Monsieur Duplessis qu'il allait les lui envoyer. La plupart des malades acadiens étaient atteints du flux maladie endémique dans la colonie. Voir aussi Duplessis au gouverneur, 21 octobre 1768, PPC, Legajo 187-A-2. Duplessis faisait part au gouverneur de la lettre qu'il venait de recevoir de M. de la Ville Breuve au sujet des malades acadiens. Bien qu'il ne lui restait en tout que deux onces d'épicacuane, il assurait le gouverneur qu'il ferait de son mieux pour recevoir et soigner les Acadiens de Saint-Louis de Natchez. Il remarquait toutefois qu'il n'y avait pas d'hôpital à son poste, et que ce qui lui servait d'infirmerie (l'ex-logement du garde-magasin) contenait des réserves de maïs aux trois quart pourries et que l'endroit était rempli de poux et de puanteur. Il s'engageait toutefois à le faire nettoyer et assurait le gouverneur qu'il ferait tout son possible pour secourir les Acadiens. Il ajoutait cependant qu'il n'avait à sa disposition qu'une allocation de dix sols par malade et une ration de pain.

23. Judice à Ulloa, 10 juin 1766, PPC, 187-A-1. Voir aussi Ulloa à Grimaldi, 4 août 1768, cité dans Kinnaird, II, 60. Dans cette lettre Ulloa se plaignait du manque de moulins dans la colonie. Selon lui il n'y avait que deux moulins à chevaux dans toute la colonie, l'un à Opelousas et l'autre en train d'être construit à Natchitoches. Ce genre de moulin bien que fonctionnant de l'aube à la nuit ne pouvait moudre que quatre boisseaux de farine par jour. Quant aux autres moulins dans la colonie, les moulins à eau, ils ne fonctionnaient que pendant la grande cru

des eaux, c'est-à-dire, entre février ou mars jusqu'en juillet.

24. Jacqueline Voorhies, ed. et trad., *Some Late Eighteenth Century Louisianians: Census Records of the Colony, 1758-1796,* (Lafayette, 1973), pp. 201-214. En 1766, la population de Cabannocé qui comptait environ 250 personnes, soit 43 familles, possédait 62 cochons, 5 bêtes à cornes et 2 moutons. Alors que certaines familles avaient plusieurs bestiaux, d'autres n'en avaient aucun.

25. Grover Rees, trad., «The Dauterive Compact: The Foundation of the Acadian Cattle Industry,» *Attakapas Gazette,* Vol. XI, No. 2 (Summer, 1976), 91. Voir aussi Ulloa au Commandant des Opelousas, 8 avril 1768, PPC, Legajo 187-A-2. Répondant à une lettre envoyée par les Acadiens demeurant à Opelousas qui demandaient des charrues et des bestiaux, Ulloa leur faisait part de son refus.

26. Du Tisne à (Unzaga), juillet 1770, PPC, Legajo, 188-A; Judice (au gouverneur), 27 août 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1; gouverneur à Judice, 19 avril 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1; Judice à (Unzaga), 3 juin 1771, PPC, Legajo, 188-B; Chevalier de Bellevue à (Unzaga), 27 mai 1771, PPC, Legajo 188-C; Judice à (Unzaga), 4 décembre 1771, PPC, Legajo 188-A.

27. Judice au (gouverneur), 1er août 1768, PPC, Legajo 187-A-2; Judice au (gouverneur), 1er avril 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1; Judice au (gouverneur), 14 juillet 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1; Nicolas Verret à Unzaga, 25 septembre 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-A.

28. Des listes dressées en 1770 sur la production de riz et de maïs dans les paroisses d'Iberville, Pointe Coupée, Fausse Rivière, Saint-Jacques, Ascension, Attakapas par leurs commandants respectifs nous apprennent que les Acadiens avaient non seulement une suffisance de graines mais aussi un surplus. Pour ces listes voir PPC, 1770 Legajo 188-I-2.

29. Chandler, «End of an Odyssey,» 77-78. Les habitants de la colonie entre 16 et 55 ans, capables de porter les armes, étaient enrôlés dans les milices respectives de leurs postes. Ces milices étaient commandées par un capitaine qui avait sous ses ordres, un lieutenant, un sous-lieutenant, quatre sergents et huit caporaux. Une fois leur ouvrage dans les champs terminé, les miliciens étaient réunis et passés en revue par leur commandant qui leur faisait faire des travaux pour la paroisse. Judice au (gouverneur), 28 mars 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1. Judice qui avait rassemblé ses miliciens pour leur distribuer des baïonnettes, des fusils et des ceinturons les avait mis aussi au travail pour couper le bois nécessaire pour la construction de l'église de l'Assomption. Pour la construction d'un chemin entre La Fourche et l'Isle aux Marais par la milice de La Fourche voir Judice au (gouverneur), 1er avril 1770, PPC, Legajo-I-1.

30. Pour les détails sur la construction de la chapelle voir Judice au gouverneur, 18 novembre 1767, PPC, Legajo 187-A-1; voir aussi Judice au gouverneur, 2 juillet 1768, PPC, Legajo 187-A-2. La chapelle de Cabannocé avait été achevée, et les habitants qui s'étaient engagés à payer deux livres et deux sols pour défrayer les frais de construction ne voulaient pas tous payer.

31. Judice au gouverneur, 28 mars 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I. Voir aussi Judice à Unzaga, 11 septembre 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-A. Judice annonçait que le bois nécessaire pour l'église de l'Assomption avait été assemblé et que la construction même de l'édifice commencée le 10 septembre allait être achevée dans deux mois.

32. Judice au gouverneur, 28 mars 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1; gouverneur à Judice, 19 avril 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I; Judice au gouverneur, 3 mai 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1; Verret à Un-

zaga, 21 mai 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-A; Unzaga à Verret, 2 juin 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-A; gouverneur à Judice, 7 juin 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1; Judice au gouverneur, 18 août 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1; Verret à Unzaga, 27 août 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-A; Judice au gouverneur, 27 août 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-I-1; Verret à Unzaga, 25 septembre 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-A; Unzaga à Judice, 10 octobre 1770, PPC, Legajo 188-A.

33. «Prêtres recommandés par O'Reilly,» 14 février 1770 cité dans Kinnaird, II, 159-160.

34. Aubry au duc de Choiseul, 14 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:56-57. Aubry remarquait dans sa lettre qu'il était indispensable de distribuer des armes aux Acadiens car ajoutait-il dans: « . . . un pays tel que celuy-ci . . . l'on vit au bout de son fusil et on est exposé aux incursions des Sauvages.»

35. Judice au gouverneur, 18 novembre 1767, PPC, Legajo 187-A-1; Une pièce de canon du calibre de six était démandée par Judice pour servir de signal en cas d'attaque. Voir aussi Chandler, «End of an Odyssey,» 78.

36. Judice au gouverneur, 2 décembre 1767, PPC, Legajo 187-A-1. Dans cette lettre Judice informait le gouverneur que les Sauvages Houmas avaient fait des insultes aux Acadiens. Voir aussi Verret au gouverneur, 26 mars 1768, PPC, Legajo 2357; Pedro Piernas, «Motifs qu'exposent les Acadiens pour ne pas vouloir s'établir et réponses qui détruisent leurs raisons mal fondées,» 27 mars 1768, PPC, Legajo 2357.

37. *Ibid.*; voir aussi Pedro Piernas, «Mandement qui sera signifié aux Acadiens qui se trouvent actuellement au fort de Saint-Louis de Natchez au nom de sa Majesté,» date illisible, 1768, PPC, Legajo, 2357-8.

38. Antonio de Ulloa, Observations sur le Manifeste présenté par les habitants de la Louisiane au Conseil Supérieur, 1769, AC, C13a, 47:64-222.

39. Mémoire de don Antonio Ulloa à Fusiliers de la Claire et Jacques Patin, commandants aux Opelousas, René Trahan et Jean-Baptiste Broussard, commandants aux Attakapas, Duplessis, commandant à Pointe Coupée, Louis Judice et Nicolas Verret, commandants à Cabannocé, et d'Arensbourg, commandant aux Allemands, 4 avril 1768, PPC, Legajo 187-A-1.

40. Judice à Ulloa, 25 avril 1768, PPC, Legajo 187-A-2: Judice à Ulloa, 29 avril 1768, PPC, Legajo 187-A-2.

41. Aubry au duc de Choiseul, 14 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:56-57.

42. Henry Jernigham à Ulloa, 28 novembre 1767; Jernigham à Ulloa, 14 décembre 1767; Ulloa à Grimaldi, 11 février 1768; cités dans Kinnaird, II, 36-37, 39, et 40-42. Monsieur Jernigham, catholique romain, habitant du Maryland, s'adressant à Don Antonio de Ulloa lui faisait par de son désir de venir s'établir à la Louisiane. Il ajoutait que d'autres Anglais catholiques comme lui, après avoir lu les lettres écrites par les Acadiens émigrés à la Louisiane à leurs familles déportées au Maryland, voulaient aussi y venir. Voir aussi Juan de la Ville Breuve au Général, 14 octobre 1768, PPC, Legajo 187-A-2. Juan de la Ville Breuve annonçait qu'un certain Jean Smith, catholique Anglais demeurant à Philadelphie voulait venir s'établir dans la colonie et obtenir les mêmes avantages que les Acadiens. Il ajoutait qu'il y avait environ une centaine d'Acadiens résidant à Philadelphie qui voulaient eux aussi partir pour la Louisiane.

43. «O'Reilly à Athanase de Mézières,» 22 janvier 1770; de Mézières à Unzaga y Amezaga, 22 mars 1770, cités dans Herbert Eugene Bolton, ed. et trad., *Athanase de Mézières and the Louisiana-Texas Frontier*, 1768-1780, 2 vols. (Cleve-

land, 1914), I, 131-132 et 155-156. «O'Reilly à Arriaga,» 29 décembre 1769, cité dans Kinnaird, II, 144-146.

44. *Ibid.*, «de Mézières à Unzaga y Amezaga», 10 juin 1770, cité dans Bolton, I, 173-174.

45. O'Reilly à Arriaga, 29 décembre 1769, cité dans Kinnaird, II, 144-146; lorsque le poste de Natchez établi par les Espagnols prouva inutile à la défense de la colonie et de son ravitaillement, le gouverneur O'Reilly consenti au départ des Acadiens de Natchez. Ils allèrent s'établir à environ 30 lieux de la capitale auprès de leurs compatriotes.

46. Aubry au duc de Choiseul, 14 mai 1765, AC, C13a, 45:56-57.

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THE NEW ORLEANS REVOLUTION OF 1768: A REAPPRAISAL

By Richard Ira Matthews

On November 3, 1762, Louisiana was officially ceded to Spain by a treaty signed at Fontainebleau by Choiseul for France and by Grimaldi for Spain.[1] The Treaty of Fontainebleau was followed on February 10, 1763, by the Treaty of Paris, which officially ended the Seven Years' War. Almost immediately France laid plans for ceding Louisiana to Spain. The Spanish, however, moved so slowly that they were still preparing to occupy the colony in 1764. Don Antonio de Ulloa finally took possession in March, 1766, but, because of the revolt in 1768, Spanish authority was not firmly established until Alejandro O'Reilly put down local resistance in 1769.[2]

During the interim between the cession of Louisiana and the arrival of Ulloa, the French King continued to act as sovereign over Louisiana, and implemented a governmental reorganization. Nicholas Chauvin de Lafrenière was named attorney-general. Foucault was appointed *commissaire ordonnateur* (controller). Louis XV also reorganized the troops serving in Louisiana and established the office of director and commandant of troops. D'Abbadie was appointed to that office and arrived in New Orleans on June 29.[3]

In October, 1764, d'Abbadie was informed by letter that Louisiana had been officially ceded to Spain and directed to turn the colony over to the first Spanish official coming to Louisiana. The colony was to be governed by Charles III and his representatives without reservations of any kind.[4] All correspondence concerning the cession was ordered to be entered in the minute-book of the Superior Council to make it generally accessible to the public.

News of the cession created great consternation in Louisiana. Every parish was invited to send delegates to a mass meeting of citizens in New Orleans and a group of the most distinguished inhabitants assembled in the capital.[5] At the meeting Lafrenière made a speech in which he suggested that Louis XV be petitioned to retain Louisiana. A resolution was unanimously adopted and Jean Milhet, the wealthiest planter in the colony, was chosen to carry this request personally to the French King. Although Milhet informed his fellow citizens by letter of the failure of his mission, they still hoped that the treaty of cession would not be put into effect.[6] Over a year had passed since d'Abbadie had been ordered to surrender the colony, but no Spanish officer had arrived.

On July 10, 1765, the Superior Council received a letter from Don Antonio de Ulloa in Havana stating that he had been appointed

governor of Louisiana and would shortly arrive in the colony. When Ulloa did not appear that year, many of the colonists were strengthened in their belief that the treaty of cession was a false document used to conceal some diplomatic maneuvering.[7]

Ulloa, accompanied by Loyola, Gayarre, and Navarro, finally arrived on March 5, 1766.[8] New Orleans was thrown into a frenzy. Ulloa refused the Superior Council's request to see his commission, stating that he would postpone taking possession of the colony until the arrival of all expected Spanish forces. The Spanish governor added that the Superior Council was only a civil tribunal, and in matters regarding the transfer of Louisiana he would deal only with Aubry, the ranking French official in Louisiana after the death of d'Abbadie. Ulloa thus served notice on the Superior Council that it would no longer be a ruling power in the colony. The hostility created by his arbitrary manner was clearly one of the causes of the subsequent events.[9]

While awaiting additional forces, Ulloa turned his attention to the alleviation of the critical economic situation existing in Louisiana. He was confronted with several problems. Would the Spanish completely reject French paper money in private transactions, or would they assume the obligations of the French government? What would be the policy of the Spanish government regarding trade, foreign and domestic? Who was to pay the debts owed by the government of Louisiana, France or Spain?[10] Foucault asked these questions of Ulloa during his first interview with the new Spanish governor. Ulloa, because of the economic hardships that would result from repudiation of the currency, decided to keep it in circulation until ordered to do otherwise. Foucault and Aubry quickly made public Ulloa's liberal declaration that French paper currency was to be accepted along with the Spanish currency at the earlier established rate of twenty-five per cent. Nevertheless, many of the colonists were not satisfied, feeling that the paper ought to be redeemed at par.[11]

Concerning commerce, Aubry, on Ulloa's orders, posted a commercial decree on September 6, 1766. It permitted French ships to bring goods into Louisiana from Martinique and Santo Domingo provided that they carried return cargoes of lumber and other products of the colony. Before unloading they were to present their passports and bills of lading to Ulloa for his inspection and signature. Merchants to whom the goods were consigned were ordered to furnish Ulloa a statement of the proposed sale price. If the supplies, as examined by an impartial party, were excessively priced, the merchants would not be permitted to sell them in Louisiana. The merchants also were required to accept the currency of the colony in payment for merchandise.[12]

Ulloa also agreed to lend Foucault the money needed to discharge some of the more pressing debts contracted before the Spanish governor's arrival. He further agreed to assume all administrative expenses incurred since March 5, 1766, when he had arrived at New Orleans.[13] Thus all governmental expenses were provided by the Spanish treasury as if Ulloa had taken formal possession. However, since French troops refused to serve Ulloa, Aubry would remain the nominal head of the colony and govern the colony according to Ulloa's dictates.

The government began to function again. Ulloa commanded and Aubry executed. Although the Spanish opposition called this a shameful compromise of the dignity and independence of the French nation, the course adopted seemed to be the only one possible. Since Ulloa held the purse and Aubry con-

trolled the military, some compromise was necessary.[14] Concerning the unorthodox arrangement, Aubry wrote on January 20, 1768:

> My position is the most extraordinary. I command for the King of France and at the same time I govern the colony as if it belonged to the King of Spain. I have almost succeeded in making French vivacity agree with Spanish gravity, by the trouble I have given myself. There has happened, thanks to God, no accident, not a Spaniard killed, not even a quarrel at all serious.[15]

Ulloa and Aubry worked well together, although Aubry despaired of Ulloa's administrative abilities. In their opinion the two men seemed to be having some success as Aubry wrote that they were «gradually molding Frenchmen to Spanish domination.»[16] However, Aubry proved to be a poor prognosticator, for only a few months later a revolution against the Spanish broke out in Louisiana.

In September, 1766, while New Orleans was in a state of upheaval over his commercial decree, Ulloa left for the Balize. The rumor that he had gone to meet additional Spanish troops added to the anxiety of the people. The governor remained at the Balize through February, 1767, but no Spanish troops arrived. The people came to believe that Ulloa had moved simply because he hated them and did not wish to live among them. However, in March, 1767, New Orleans learned that Ulloa's purpose had been to await the arrival of his fiancee, the Marchioness d'Abrado, from Peru. When she arrived, the marriage ceremony was performed at the Balize, rather than New Orleans, by Ulloa's private chaplain, which greatly insulted the local clergy as well as the colonists.[17]

A far more serious act was the issuance of the commercial decree of 1768. Under the new ordinance the commerce of Louisiana was to be restricted to certain Spanish ports, and carried on ships of Spanish construction manned by a Spanish captain and a crew two-thirds Spanish. Frightened by the threat to their business interests, Orleanians appealed to the Superior Council for revocation of the measure.

Even so, two-thirds of the year, 1768, passed in apparent quiet with the colonists outwardly resigned to their fate. However, a secret conspiracy was laid in New Orleans and the neighboring parishes by some of the most influential men in the colony, such as Lafrenière; Foucault; the planter Balthasar Masan, a retired captain of infantry and a knight of Saint Louis; Pierre Marquis, a captain of the Swiss troops serving France; Jean Baptiste de Noyan, a retired captain of cavalry; Bienville, a lieutenant in the navy; Julien Jerome Doucet, a lawyer recently arrived from France; Jean and Joseph Milhet; Pedro Caresso, Petit, and Poupet, who were among the leading merchants; Hardy de Boisblanc, a former member of the Superior Council and a planter of note; and Joseph Villière, militia commander of the German Coast.[18] Lafrenière, the acknowledged leader, worked incessantly to promote the insurrection and directed the formation of a secret association for that purpose.[19]

The conspirators hoped to disgust the Spaniards with Louisiana, thereby encouraging the King of Spain to abandon the colony. The motives that inspired the conspirators were varied. Some were moved by loyalty to France, others by the spirit of adventure. Still others were primarily concerned with personal financial interests. «Lafrenière,» Ulloa reported to the Spanish court, «spends more

than he earns, the revolution was for him a pretext not to pay his debts.»[20]

Despite the frequent meetings of the conspirators, the officials were taken by surprise. Aubry claimed that he had no knowledge of a plot until October 25, 1768.[21] Even so, open opposition to Ulloa gradually became evident throughout the colony. Meetings were held in New Orleans and elsewhere. On the German Coast, the conspirators spread the belief that Spanish debts owed the German farmers would not be paid.[22] To disprove this report, Ulloa sent a representative named Maxant, with 1,500 piasters, to the German Coast to settle the indebtedness. The conspirators, however, felt that payment would be unfavorable to their interests. When Maxant stopped at the house of d'Arensbourg, the patriarchal commander of the German Coast, he was arrested and relieved of the money.[23]

Ulloa's account of this occurrence is found in a letter dated Havana, December 4, 1768, one day after he arrived there from New Orleans:

> In the early morning after Maxant's departure, Lafrenière and Marquis sent Villière and André Verret in pursuit of Maxant to prevent the remitting of money to the Germans, fearing that if he should satisfy them they might no longer have any motive to join the cause of the conspirators.
>
> Maxant arrived at the habitation of d'Arensbourg for whom I had given him a letter and when he delivered it to him he found him to be so different a man from what he had expected him to be. In spite of his great age [he was] determined to defend liberty and neither wanting to be a subject of the King of Spain, nor the country to belong to the king.
>
> Maxant was arrested by Verret on the place of Cantrelle, the father-in-law of another Verret and Commander of the Acadians, where he was much maltreated. Verret declared later that he received the order to arrest Maxant from Villière, Lafrenière, and Marquis.[24]

On October 27 a general meeting in New Orleans was attended by delegates, generally the wealthiest planters, from every parish. Lafrenière, the chief speaker, declared, «Without liberty there are few virtues.» After hearing Lafrenière's bold and eloquent words delegates signed a petition addressed to the Superior Council.[25] Ulloa was accused of being an usurper because he had ordered the Spanish flag raised at various places without having presented his title and credentials to the Superior Council. He was charged with having ship captains and their vessels detained in port without cause by his own private authority. Furthermore, the governor was alleged to have kept several French citizens under arrest on board a Spanish frigate. In conclusion, the petition demanded Ulloa's immediate expulsion, restoration of the rights and privileges of Frenchmen and freedom of trade to ships of all flags.[26]

During the night of October 27 the guns at the Tchoupitoulas gate were spiked. The next morning Noyan led a contingent of Acadians into the city, and Villère marched in at the head of 300 men from the German Coast. They were joined by the planters who lived below New Orleans who forced the city gates.[27] Stores and private houses were closed while the rebels marched through the streets. A Spanish frigate, *Le Volant*, anchored in the

harbor, moved out and cast anchor in deeper water. The rumor that she was going to fire on the town produced wild excitement.[28]

Although he had only 110 men, Aubry took steps to protect the Spaniards. Ammunition was distributed to his men. Lafreniere was asked to stop the revolt. Aubry assured Lafrenière that the revolution would be opposed with force, and reminded him that «chiefs of a conspiracy have always met with a tragical end.»[29] When Aubry's appeals to Lafrenière and the other leaders of the revolt proved fruitless, he informed Ulloa that his safety could not be guaranteed, and requested that Ulloa and his family board the Spanish frigate. Aubry escorted Ulloa on board and left with the Spaniard an officer and twenty men.

At the first sign of danger, Gayarre, Loyola, and Navarro barricaded themselves in Ulloa's house. There they remained for four days after Ulloa boarded the frigate. Occasionally the insurgents rushed forward as if to storm the house, uttering loud cheers for the French king and heaping abusive language upon the Spaniards. Some of the rebel leaders persuaded them, with assurances that the Spaniards would withdraw, to refrain from violence and to disperse.[30]

Later, in a letter to O'Reilly, Aubry indicated how serious he thought the danger had been:

> Several times the party of the rebels and that of the Spaniards, which was certainly not the strongest, were near coming to blows. Should that misfortune have happened, your Excellency would now be treading on the ashes of New Orleans.[31]

In the meantime, the October 27 petition of the rebels was delivered to the Superior Council by Foucault on October 28. The Superior Council met the following morning to consider the petition while some 1,000 rebels, assembled on the public square, declared that they would exterminate all the Spaniards and their adherents if they were not expelled. The Superior Council began by asking Aubry if Ulloa had produced his powers to take possession of the colony in the name of the King of Spain. Aubry replied that he had seen nothing official on the subject.[32]

Lafrenière made a fiery speech[33] which he concluded by asking, as attorney-general, that Ulloa be declared an usurper of legal authority; that he be ordered to leave the colony; and that Loyola, Navarro, and Gayarre be declared responsible for the bonds they had issued unless they presented their commission from the King of Spain. Finally, Lafrenière demanded that the planters and merchants be permitted to choose deputies to carry their petition to the French king, and that the decree of the Superior Council be posted, printed, read, and recorded throughout Louisiana.[34]

The Superior Council agreed to a decree conforming to Lafrenière's proposals. Ulloa was allowed only three days to leave the colony. Loyola, Gayarre, and Navarro were to remain to settle their accounts, and were made personally responsible for all the bonds and papers they had put into circulation. During the afternoon of October 29 the decree was officially communicated to Ulloa and the assembled insurgents.[35]

Aubry had opposed the proceedings of the Superior Council, saying:

> I protest against the decree . . . which dismisses . . . Ulloa from this colony. Their most Christian and Catholic Majesties will be offended at the treatment inflicted on a personage of his character; and though I

> have so small a force subject to my orders, I would, with all my might, oppose his departure, were I not apprehensive of endangering . . . the lives of all the Spaniards in the colony.[36]

Two days later Aubry forwarded a detailed account of all that had occurred to one of the French ministers in Paris. The Superior Council lost no time in sending its own account of the events to France.[37]

On October 31, the Superior Council annulled Aubry's protest. That evening Ulloa and his family boarded a chartered French vessel because the frigate, *Le Volant*, needed repairs. Early on the morning of November 1, a band of Frenchmen, who had spent most of the night at a wedding, appeared on the river bank where the French vessel was moored. They sang patriotic songs and indulged in shouts of exultation. One of them, named Petit, cut the ropes holding the vessel, and they watched Ulloa and his party drift down the river. The vessel stopped after a short distance and did not sail until the afternoon.[38]

Meanwhile, Marquis, the military commander of the insurgents, ordered fifty militiamen on board a boat to accompany Ulloa's vessel to the mouth of the river. They were to remain at the Balize to prevent any arriving Spanish force from reaching the city. Shortly after the party embarked, Aubry commanded them to land, under threat of being fired upon. According to Aubry, «On that occasion I was obeyed for the first time.»[39] Sergeants and bailiffs of the Council who witnessed Ulloa's departure reported these events to the Council. The revolution was an accomplished fact.

After the expulsion of Ulloa the planters and merchants issued a memorial or manifesto, justifying the revolution of October 28, 1768. It was published by Braud, the king's printer, on Foucault's authorization. Although it contained further allegations and was more developed in its arguments, the document repeated all that Lafrenière had said to the Superior Council, and seems to have been written by him.[40]

The memorial opened by stating the necessity of the revolution. It next dealt with the letter of April 21, 1776, from Louis XV to d'Abbadie notifying him of the cession. Louis XV had written that,

> . . . in consequence of the friendship and affection of his Catholic Majesty, that he will be pleased to give orders to his governor and to all other officers employed in the service of said colony, that the ecclesiastics and religious houses who attend to the parochial duties and to the missions should continue their functions there; that the ordinary judges should continue, as well as the Superior Council, to render justice according to the laws, forms, and usages of the colony; that the inhabitants be kept and maintained in their possessions; hoping besides that His Catholic Majesty will give to his new subjects in Louisiana the same marks of kindness and protection that were felt under the preceding domination, and whose greater effects the misfortunes of war alone have prevented them from feeling; that he orders him, besides, to cause the present letter to be registered at the Superior Council of New Orleans, in order that the different estates of the colony be informed of its contents and may have recourse to it if need be, the

> present letter being for no other end.[41]

The colonists had taken these promises to be binding on the King of Spain, which they were not.

The next section of the manifesto concerned charges against Ulloa. Among the accusations was the charge that he had granted to five or six persons the exclusive privilege of trading with the Indians in the Illinois district. The commercial decrees of 1766 and 1768 were denounced vehemently. The Spaniard was accused of violating «fair promises made on his arrival, of an antipathy to humanity, and of a natural disposition to do evil deeds.»[41]

The condemnation of Ulloa included these words:

> . . . M. Ulloa loaded with our hatred, which he has so justly deserved. Cannot his nation reproach him with having failed in the rules of Spanish policy, which, gentle and insinuating in the beginning becomes tyrannical only when the yoke has been imposed?[43]

Fearing an open insult to Spain, Aubry had these words erased, and suppressed 300 copies of the document which had already been printed.[44]

Ulloa was further charged with interfering with the importation of Negroes, the establishment of a new tribunal, and forcing the abandonment of a brick yard on the grounds that it was too close to the town.[45] Don Antonio was also condemned for threatening to sell the Acadians as slaves, for his haughtiness, his contempt for the ecclesiastical laws of the colony, his absence from French churches, and for having Mass said in his home. Charges were also made that Ulloa had allowed the sacrament of marriage to be administered, under his own roof by his own chaplain, to a white man and a black female slave without the permission of the curate or the required publication of banns.

The memorial gave reasons why Louisiana could be of great value to France but could never be of value to Spain which had little need of her products. It also was argued that French retention of Louisiana would be a better guaranty of the safety of the Spanish provinces in America than would be Spain's possession of Louisiana. The manifesto pointed out that the Indians, always hostile to Spain, would join with any enemy of Spain, but would always fight on the side of France. The manifesto ended with a pathetic appeal to Louis XV to take back the colony immediately.[46]

The representatives of the colonists in France received a cool reception when they presented the petition to the Duke de Choiseul. They returned to Louisiana unsuccessful except for an order refunding the colonial debt at sixty per cent of its par value, payable in five per cent bonds.[47]

Meanwhile, Ulloa, safe in Havana, sent a report to his government, making as good a case for himself as his opponents had made against him. When his report reached Madrid, the Council of Ministers met immediately to determine whether the colony should be retained or returned to France. It was decided that the authority of His Catholic Majesty should be maintained and troops sent to subdue the insurgents. Don Alejandro O'Reilly,[48] appointed governor and captain-general of the province of Louisiana, arrived at the Balize on July 23, 1769, with twenty-three transports, having 3,000 soldiers on board.[49]

News of the approach of an immense

Spanish army and fleet to take permanent possession of Louisiana paralyzed the spirit of the people. The revolt was virtually at an end, even though resistance was briefly considered. Marquis, a white cockade in his hat, made ineffectual efforts to persuade the people to oppose the landing of the Spanish forces. Petit appeared with a pair of pistols in his hands and spoke with passionate violence, declaring himself ready to blow out the brains of every coward who would not cooperate in resistance. They could command no popular sympathy for their cause and soon retired.[50]

Their hopes of resisting gone, the alarmed leaders of the insurgents sought Aubry's advice and protection. Aubry expressed the belief that O'Reilly would not seek vengeance, especially since blood had not been spilled in the revolution. He recommended immediate and complete submission, promising to inform the rebel leaders of O'Reilly's intentions as soon as possible. Aubry ordered the insurgents to remain quiet and immediately dispatched a messenger to the German Coast to command the Germans to avoid resistance, under penalty of punishment as rebels.[51]

On the following day, July 24, a Spanish officer, Don Francisco Bouligny, ascended the river, bearing dispatches from O'Reilly to Aubry. Gayarre, Loyola, Navarro, and their friends and subordinates greeted Bouligny upon his arrival in New Orleans and proceeded to Aubry's house where they were cordially received. The envoy delivered O'Reilly's letter in which Aubry was requested to take all necessary measures to facilitate the transfer of Louisiana to Spain. Aubry indicated his willingness to deliver the province to O'Reilly at any time, and to use his troops, together with those of O'Reilly, to crush any resistance.[52]

The next day Aubry addressed the people of New Orleans in the public square, informing them of the imminent arrival of O'Reilly and his forces. They were warned that nothing short of prompt and complete submission could ward off disaster. Aubry promised that the people would enjoy favorable treatment if they offered no resistance. Later Lafrenière called on Aubry at his home and informed him that he, Marquis, and Milhet had decided to go down the river to pay homage to the Spanish general, to assure him of their complete submission, and to seek his clemency. Aubry encouraged them to proceed, and told them that it was the only rational action possible.

Lafrenière, Marquis, and Milhet set out, accompanied by Bouligny, the harbor master, and an experienced pilot to guide O'Reilly's vessels safely through the pass at the Balize.[53] Forty hours later they reached the Balize, where Bouligny presented the Frenchmen to O'Reilly on board the general's flagship. Despite O'Reilly's geniality, the Frenchmen immediately realized that they were facing a far stronger man than Ulloa. O'Reilly was a hardened soldier to whom treason was the greatest of crimes and swift military punishment the best of all protection against it.[54]

Lafrenière assured O'Reilly of the submission of the colony to the orders of the kings of France and Spain and added:

> We beg your excellency not to consider it a country to be conquered. The orders of which you are the bearer are sufficient to put you in possession, and make more impression on hearts than the arms which you have in your hand . . . The colony claims of your kindness, privileges, and of your equity, sufficient delays for those who shall desire to emigrate.[55]

O'Reilly answered that he would do all in his power to learn the truth. While he would regret doing the least harm to anyone, he was prepared to lead an expedition up the Mississippi River as far as the Illinois country, if necessary, in order to have the Spanish flag respected. The general asked how a handful of men could have considered resistance to one of the most powerful kings in Europe and on what grounds they expected the French king to listen to the complaints of a seditious people.[56] At the mention of the word «seditious,» Marquis interrupted to explain the conduct of the colonists. O'Reilly replied that he would listen to explanations with pleasure at the proper time, and added:

> God be praised, I am free from all prejudices, and I am aware that things, which from afar may look as if they were clothed with the dark hue of guilt, may, at a shorter distance, appear decked in the white robes of innocence.[57]

The delegates then had dinner with O'Reilly who treated them courteously, and sent them away full of hope that the insurrection would be forgiven.[58]

Back in New Orleans, Lafrenière, Marquis, and Milhet reported O'Reilly's conciliatory words to their countrymen. Men who had taken up arms and gone to New Orleans returned home, and several persons who intended to leave the colony decided to remain.[59]

Meanwhile, Aubry went to the Balize to pay his respects to O'Reilly and make arrangements for the official transfer of the colony on August 18. He returned to New Orleans and issued a proclamation commanding the city residents and distinguished planters of the neighboring countryside to attend the «august ceremony» prepared to assure O'Reilly of their submission and fidelity to Charles III.[60]

On the night of August 17, the general's frigate and the troop transports docked at New Orleans. The following day, the French troops and militia formed on one side of the public square, facing the vessels. The Spanish frigate fired a salute, General O'Reilly landed, and 3,000 soldiers marched in columns from the ships and formed on the other three sides of the square. Aubry, at the head of his troops, received the general and read the orders and powers which O'Reilly had presented to him earlier. He concluded:

> You have just heard the . . . orders of their Majesties, . . ., with regard to the province of Louisiana, which has been ceded irrevocably to the Crown of Spain. From this moment you are subjects of His Catholic Majesty, and in virtue of the orders of the King, my master, I release you from the oath of fidelity which you owed to His Most Christian Majesty.[61]

Bells rang and a salute was fired from the guns of the Spanish vessels. O'Reilly received the keys to the city from Aubry and the French flag was replaced by the flag of Spain. The dignitaries were received at the cathedral by the clergy; a *Te Deum* was sung. There followed a pompous parade through the awed crowds.[62]

The cession was complete in the eyes of the humiliated inhabitants, but not in those of O'Reilly. In secret he proceeded to take the depositions of witnesses to events in the colony, and to obtain pertinent papers and documents. He asked Aubry for the names of the leading conspirators, the public and secret documents pertaining to the revolt, and the

true causes of the insurrection.[63]

Aubry answered the inquiry on August 20. He named Masan, Lafrenière, Marquis, Noyan, Bienville, and Villère as leaders of the revolution and minutely related their respective roles. No attorney could have drawn a more precise and fatal indictment.[64] The French commander concluded:

> I shall communicate to your Excellency the decrees, the memorials, and all the documents of iniquities which were fabricated in those times of confusion and disorder. I shall deliver the protests which I have made against these acts of injustice. My conduct will be laid before the judge, the most equitable and the most enlightened. His approval which I dare flatter myself I have merited, will be the greatest honor and the finest recompense that I shall ever be able to receive.[65]

Because of this letter it has been generally held that Aubry treacherously arraigned his fellow Frenchmen, and is answerable for the harsh punishment meted out to those he accused.[66]

On August 21, the Spanish general notified Aubry of his orders from Charles III to arrest and try the leaders of the revolt. Immediately, in Aubry's presence, he summoned nine of the chief conspirators to his house on various pretexts, and had three others arrested in the town hall. Confronting the prisoners – Lafrenière, Noyan, Marquis, Caresse, Jean Milhet, Joseph Milhet, Petit, Masan, Doucet, Poupet, and de Boisblanc[67] – O'Reilly said:

> The Spanish nation is revered and respected by the whole earth. Louisiana is then the only country where it is ignored, and where there is a lack of regard due to it. His Catholic Majesty is greatly offended at the violence which was used and at the outrage committed against his governor, his officers and his troops . . . He orders me to have arrested and judged according to the laws, the authors of all these violences.[68]

He read his orders and added:

> You are accused of being the chiefs of revolt. I arrest you in the name of the King. I trust that you will be able to prove your innocence, and that I shall soon be able to return the swords which I have just taken away from you. You will produce your defense before the equitable judges who are here before you. It is they who will judge you.[69]

The general informed the prisoners that their property would be confiscated according to the custom of Spain; but he promised to give the wives and children of the prisoners all the aid they might need. Lafrenière and his companions were escorted to their prisons – some to the barracks and others to Spanish ships. O'Reilly ordered that they were to be interrogated and their testimony taken in writing.[70]

Only one of the conspirators, Joseph Villère, had avoided the governor's orders. When O'Reilly decided to arrest the conspirators, Villère was at his plantation on the German Coast contemplating flight to English territory. In time, however, he received a letter from Aubry stating that he had nothing to fear from O'Reilly and that he could come to New Orleans in perfect safety. According to Bossu, Villère's contemporary, Villère was arrested at the city gates, and imprisoned in a Spanish transport ship. In his rage at Aubry's

duplicity, he struck the Spanish officer in charge of the vessel and was immediately bayoneted by Spanish soldiers. He was placed aboard the frigate where he died several days later.[71]

News of the arrests and of Villère's death terrorized the people, many of whom secretly prepared to flee to the English colonies. Most of the houses in the city were closed; streets were deserted and silent except for the Spanish patrols. To alleviate the fears of the population, O'Reilly posted, on August 22, a proclamation of clemency for all except the persons under arrest. The next day, he commanded the inhabitants of New Orleans and vicinity to appear before him at his home on August 26 to take the solemn oath of loyalty to Charles III. The people in out-lying settlements were informed that at a later date they too would have to take the oath. Persons who chose not to take the oath were to settle their affairs in a reasonable time and leave the colony. However, almost everyone eventually took the oath of vassalage and fealty to Spain because they had no other choice. Even if all of them had wished to do so, the colonists were too few to successfully resist O'Reilly's forces.[72]

Meanwhile, O'Reilly wrote Aubry that he had obtained the original of the «Memorial of the planters, merchants, and other inhabitants of Louisiana, on the event of the 29th of October, 1768.» It and the order authorizing publication signed by Foucault were found in the possession of the printer Denis Braud. Foucault, in secret an ardent insurrectionist who had urged the rebels at every turn, had refrained from open rebellion, claiming that as *commissaire ordonnateur*, he could give more effective aid by pretending not to be a rebel. The general now maintained that Foucault's signature on the printing order left no doubt that he was a leader of the revolt. Aubry was asked to arrest him immediately. This request took Aubry by surprise but he readily complied with it. Foucault was placed under house arrest.[73]

About a month later, the interrogation of Foucault began but he refused to answer on the ground that he had acted only in his capacity as a French official and was answerable only to the French government. Willing to stand trial only in France, Foucault repeatedly asked to be sent there. O'Reilly decided to comply with his request, and on October 14 the *commissaire ordonnateur* embarked for France. At the time of Foucault's departure, Denis Braud was arrested. He pleaded that, as the king's printer, he was obligated to print everything sent to him by Foucault. His defense was held valid, and he was quickly set free.[74]

Braud's release and Foucault's departure were preludes to the great trial which soon began. One of the first conspirators to be tried was Lafrenière, the attorney-general. Under oath, he detailed his role, directly and indirectly, in the conspiracy. He maintained that he had not known that a conspiracy existed until October 22nd or 23rd, when he heard from an unnamed source that a petition for the expulsion of Ulloa had been drawn up and signed. The attorney-general was asked if the cession had not been registered on the minute-book of the Superior Council, whether he had not assisted Ulloa in taking charge of Louisiana, and if Ulloa had not been presented by Aubry to all the inhabitants as the person designated by Charles III to govern Louisiana. Lafrenière replied that the cession had been registered, but as Ulloa had not taken formal possession of the colony, and as Aubry continued to command the troops, he never considered Ulloa as governor.[75]

The Frenchman was accused of having

referred to Spain's commercial regulations as «fatal decrees» that would destroy the colony, of having stated that the Spanish flag was raised at the Balize and in the Illinois country by Ulloa without proper authority, and with predicting the final overthrow of Ulloa and the Spaniards. Lafrenière also was accused of exclaiming that he would rather abandon the land he had inherited from his ancestors than live in chains under the Spanish. The prosecution charged that Lafrenière appeared not to realize that these statements were highly seditious, caused great unrest among the people, and were very offensive to the justice and clemency with which Charles III treated his subjects. His speeches and actions, according to the investigators, were made more serious by the office he held, an office which should uphold royal authority and sustain respect for royal law.[76]

Lafrenière admitted that he should have condemned the petition to oust Ulloa and begged for pardon, promising eternal fidelity and obedience. He maintained that he would have seconded Aubry's protest of October 29 before the Superior Council, except that it was not the custom for him to be present when a conclusion was being read. Lafrenière further testified that he did not favor subsequent petitions, such as the one to secure the departure of the frigate, *Le Volant*, but pretended to agree to prevent harm befalling the remaining Spanish subjects and to prevent an attack upon the Spanish ship. He appealed to Aubry for confirmation of his testimony.[77]

The inquisitors pointed out that if he had joined Aubry in support of Ulloa, the colonists' actions would have carried less weight. Lafrenière replied that, as Aubry could testify, he had always cooperated for the peace and tranquillity of the colony. If he seemed to differ with Aubry, it was only because he had tried to keep the fanatics from getting the upper hand, thereby preventing bloodshed.

Confronted with a letter to him from Caresse, Lafrenière admitted that he might have received it, but was not sure. The letter stated that Caresse, who wrote the petition to expel Ulloa, had sent Lafrenière a copy of the fifth article of the petition which contained the accusations against Ulloa. The prosecutor, in view of this evidence, wondered how Lafrenière could deny taking part in the initiation and direction of the conspiracy and ridiculed as unbelievable the idea that Caresse would have revealed details of the conspiracy to Lafrenière if they had not previously discussed it. Why did Caresse speak of him as the «orator of Rome reborn in Louisiana» if the attorney-general were not implicated? Lafrenière could only answer that Caresse possibly wrote the letter to get him to join the conspiracy even though he had never given Caresse any encouragement.[78]

Another letter placed in evidence Lafrenière acknowledged to have been written to him by a Mr. Duterte of New Orleans whom he had not seen for some time. Questioned about Duterte's description of him as «full of glory and deserving of the title of father and liberator of our country,»[79] Lafrenière quickly replied that he could not be held responsible for what Mr. Duterte wrote, claiming for a second time that he had disposed of the letter before reading it.

In further testimony, Lafrenière denied either meeting with Foucault and Hardy de Boisblanc, at the latter's home on October 28, 1768, the eve of the revolution, or offering to sponsor de Kernion, Marquis' brother-in-law, as a supernumerary councilor. He also denied proposing or having any knowledge of a toast in which he mentioned, «the prosperity of the colony and the expulsion of Ulloa and all the Spaniards.»[80]

He responded with a denial to still another charge that, some fifteen days before the revolt, observing a colonist who appeared so happy and contented, the attorney-general had stated,

> «Well, you are the only one that seems to be happy in the midst of such calamities, particularly since the decree of commerce is reducing us to extreme misery.»[81]

The prosecution, in closing, extracted from Lafrenière an admission of the gravity with which the crime of rebellion against a monarch was regarded by all nations. However, Lafrenière continued to maintain that he had never disturbed or excited the town and had nothing more to do with the revolution than that to which he had previously testified.[82]

Among the other conspirators examined was Marquis, whose interrogation took place on September 29. Marquis claimed that he knew nothing of the petition nor had he signed it. He had been at his home, a short distance from New Orleans, when several of his neighbors asked him to accompany them to investigate the unrest in the city. Arriving in town, he saw the streets filled with people. Some of the militia officers begged him to assume command of the militia and requested a commission for him from Aubry. Marquis proceeded to Aubry's house to receive his commission, but was told that the governor was very busy and he would have to wait for a few days. In the meantime, Aubry told him to exercise his duties as commander of the militia.[83] During his second day in New Orleans, several of the militia captains informed him that Aubry had ordered him to muster a detachment to sail for the Balize. As he was carrying out these instructions he encountered an infuriated Aubry, who ordered the immediate recall of the men. Marquis added that he promptly complied and commanded militia captain Joseph Milhet to do likewise.[84]

Another of the leading conspirators, Noyan, was interrogated on the same day. While he readily admitted knowing about the conspiracy from its beginning, Noyan could recall only that the people of Louisiana had been generally dissatisfied with Ulloa. The accused admitted that he and some of his friends had considered emigrating to the English colonies. However, he remained and, with twelve of his comrades, went to New Orleans during the revolt to act as representatives for the inhabitants of the Acadian Coast. There, they signed the petition for the expulsion of Ulloa.[85]

On September 27, Joseph Milhet, a planter and captain of militia, was questioned. He verified Marquis' testimony concerning the dispatch of the militia to the Balize. He admitted that he signed and circulated Caresse's petition demanding Ulloa's expulsion, but maintained that this was the extent of his participation in the conspiracy prior to October 29. Milhet confessed to taking up arms on the day of the revolt, but merely as a subordinate, following the orders of Marquis and the other rebel leaders. Concerning the meeting held at Masan's house following Aubry's announcement that O'Reilly had arrived at the Balize, Milhet confessed that he and the other leaders of the conspiracy had deliberated for only a short time before deciding unanimously to send representatives to assure O'Reilly of their complete and total submission to the King of Spain and to implore the clemency and pity of His Catholic Majesty. Milhet's interrogation ended with his confession that in committing the various crimes with which he was charged, he had not properly considered the gravity of his behavior, but had let himself be swayed by the deportment of the oth-

ers.[86]

The only other interrogation recorded is that of Caresse. His testimony repeated Lafrenière's concerning the harsh Spanish commercial decrees and recognition of Ulloa as the authorized representative of Spain. He confessed writing the petition to the Superior Council demanding Ulloa's expulsion, but claimed that this was the only document in which he had collaborated.[87] However, Caresse denied making a show of armed force to intimidate the Superior Council into issuing the decree expelling Ulloa. He maintained that he had tried only to prevent violence and denied even going near the building where the Superior Council met on the day of the insurrection. He also denied having given orders to any of the inhabitants during the uprising. Caresse did admit that he was partially responsible for the plan to form a bank for the purpose of financing a republic which the conspirators hoped to create. He had been aided in this endeavor by Marquis, Doucet, Hardy de Boisblanc, Petit, and others whose names he could not recall.[88]

Caresse vigorously insisted that he was not guilty of treason even though he had already confessed to writing the petition for Ulloa's expulsion. The prosecution asked how he could doubt Ulloa's authority since Ulloa had been paying the administrative costs of Louisiana for some two and one-half years preceding the insurrection. Finally, the prosecutor asked, why had Aubry turned various forts and trading posts over to Ulloa, if he were not the legitimate representative of His Spanish Majesty? Caresse's only answer was that he and the other conspirators felt justified in their actions, that Ulloa's offenses against the colony had necessitated strong measures, and that he had merely done his duty as a Frenchman and a native of Louisiana.[89]

Although the accused men appeared unable to refute the charges brought against them, they refused to admit that they were guilty of treason. They justified their conduct on the following grounds: (1) Charles III had never taken possession of Louisiana. Since Ulloa had never shown his credentials, the colonists were not required to receive him as the representative of the Spanish king and had the right to consider him an imposter whom they could dismiss from the colony. (2) The French settlers had not taken the oath of allegiance to Spain since the formal ceremony transferring Louisiana to Spain was never carried out. Therefore, the colony remained French. (3) Since French laws had never been repealed, the accused should be tried and judged according to French, not Spanish, law.[90]

Don Felix del Rey, a lawyer from Santo Domingo, who was the prosecuting attorney, presented to the court on October 20, 1769, all the evidence, together with the laws applicable to the case. Del Rey dismissed that part of the defense which questioned the propriety of trying the prisoners under Spanish law. He reasoned that Louisiana had belonged to Spain since the treaty of 1763, and that the King of France had so informed the inhabitants through d'Abbadie. Whether the colonists knew it or not, Ulloa had shown his credentials to Aubry, the official French representative in Louisiana. Since Ulloa had paid all the expenses of the colony from the time of his arrival, this fact alone was sufficient proof that Louisiana was under the ownership and jurisdiction of Spain. Furthermore, the Spanish king had overruled this contention by sending a tribunal from Spain.[91]

Del Rey presented a well-prepared, expertly documented case. He concluded that the accused were guilty of rebellion, and asked that they be sentenced according to their respective degrees of guilt.[92] O'Reilly,

as president of the court, found the prisoners guilty on October 24 and pronounced judgment:

> . . . I do condemn the aforesaid Nicholas Chauvin de Lafrenière, Jean Baptiste Noyan, Pedro Caresse, Pierre Marquis, and Joseph Milhet, the chiefs and principal movers of the aforesaid conspiracy to the ordinary pain of the gallows . . . I condemn the aforesaid Petit to perpetual imprisonment in such a castle or fortress as it may please his majesty to designate; the aforesaid Balthasar Masan and Julien Jerome Doucet, to ten years imprisonment; with the understanding that none of them shall ever be permitted to live in any of the dominions of his Catholic Majesty . . . and to be caused to be gathered up together and burnt by the hand of the common hangman all the printed copies of the document entitled «Memorial of the planters, merchants, and other inhabitants of Louisiana on the event of the 29th of October, 1768,» and that all other publications relative to said conspiracy be dealt with in the same manner . . . and I do decree, in conformity with the same laws, that the property of every one of the accused be confiscated to the profit of the King's treasury.[93]

The effects of the verdict were predictable. Strenuous efforts were made to suspend execution of the sentence until an appeal could be made to Charles III. Some women, whose fathers, brothers, or husbands had remained faithful to Spain, appealed to O'Reilly. Loyola, Gayarre, and Navarro interceded on behalf of the conspirators, all to no avail. O'Reilly refused all requests, stating that the decision was final and that his instructions compelled him to carry out the sentences.[94]

However, one provision of the sentence was amended. Under French administration of the colony only Negroes had acted as hangmen, but the Spanish feared that execution of the leaders of the revolution by a Negro would be too great an offense against the community. Since no white man could be found to act as hangman, the sentence was changed to execution by a firing squad.[95] At 3:00 P. M. on October 25, Marquis, Lafrenière, Milhet, Noyan, and Caresse were escorted to the barracks yard where a large body of Spanish troops were in formation. The clerk of the court, Francisco Xavier Rodriguez, read aloud their sentence in Spanish, and it was repeated in French by interpreters. The public crier read it to the troops and the people. A bench was placed for the doomed men, but they remained standing. Disdaining a blindfold, Marquis said, «I have braved death too often to fear it now.»[96] Lafrenière, in a final display of heroics, gave the command to fire.[97]

Immediately following the executions and the destruction of the seditious documents, Masan, Milhet, Poupet, Doucet, and Boisblanc were transported to Havana and imprisoned in Moro Castle. Masan's son later went to Madrid where he pleaded that his father be pardoned or that he be permitted to serve his parent's sentence. Charles III granted a full pardon, not only to Masan, but to the others as well. None of them returned to Louisiana, and it is believed that they went to Cape Français in Santo Domingo.

Within a month of the executions, Aubry found it expedient to leave the colony hurriedly and surreptitiously. He boarded the ship *Père de Famille* which he intercepted before it reached the Balize. His luggage was re-

ported to contain a large amount of gold and silver coin for which there is no accounting. The only reasonable explanation would seem to be that Aubry extorted, blackmailed, and embezzled the funds during the confused and troubled period of his administration of Louisiana. Aubry was never to enjoy his ill-gotten wealth, for his vessel encountered a storm near the French coast and sank with all on board.[98]

Following Aubry's departure and the deportation of the prisoners, O'Reilly abolished all French laws in the province. On November 21, he issued a proclamation abolishing the Superior Council, replacing it with the Cabildo. O'Reilly appointed lieutenant-governors for the several districts of the province. A commandant, at the rank of captain with civil and military authority, was appointed for each parish or settlement. The general also published an abridgment of Spanish law in French, known as the «Ordinances and instructions of Don Alejandro O'Reilly.» Spanish was to be the official language. The *code noir*, previously in force in the colony, was modified and reenacted. Foreigners were prohibited from passing through Louisiana without passports, and the inhabitants were forbidden to trade with the English colonies. With order restored and an efficient government established, O'Reilly departed in the summer of 1770, leaving Governor Don Luis de Unzaga and 1200 troops to govern Louisiana.[99]

The uprising of October 29, 1768, resulting in the expulsion of Ulloa and the departure of the Spanish frigate, cannot be traced to any single cause. Although not necessarily comprehensive, any adequate list of causes would have to include the various motives of the leaders of the revolt, the personalities and behavior of Ulloa and Aubry, and, most important, a series of interlocking economic factors.

Investigation into economic conditions in the colony at the time of the transfer of Louisiana to Spain affords a partial explanation of the revolution of 1768. The population of Louisiana was between 8,250 and 11,500, about half of whom were Negroes. The major occupation was the cultivation of rice and other food crops, indigo, and tobacco. Grain was grown to a limited extent together with some small scale livestock raising. Trade in indigo amounted to 82,000 pounds in 1762. In addition, the fur trade had grown into a lucrative source of revenue. Exports of lumber to the West Indies were valued at 180,000 livres annually. The return cargoes consisted of sugar and liquors. Considering the sparse population of Louisiana, large quantities of wine and brandy were imported. The illegal trade with the English was also important to the colony's economy.

For some years the finances of Louisiana had been in a deplorable condition. Paper money, badly inflated, was virtually the only form of currency in use. As late as May, 1769, Aubry stated that there was a dearth of specie in the province. Furthermore, notes issued by the colonial officials, amounting to some 7,000,000 livres, were not backed by gold or silver reserves, which rendered them valueless.[100]

Despite these financial problems, writers dealing with this period have stressed the loyalty and devotion of the French colonists to Louis XV. It is difficult, however, to see what the French king had done to deserve this devotion. According to Gayarre, the province of Louisiana had been in a starving condition for sixty-seven years. Three-fourths of the inhabitants were said to be in a virtual state of bankruptcy at the time of the cession of the province. Aubry declared that governmental

weakness had for many years prevented the observance of the laws and he pictured the inhabitants as being in a desperate economic situation.[101] Aubry contended that most of the inhabitants were led astray by some dozen conspirators whose financial affairs were in great disorder, and who hoped to recoup their fortunes by revolution.[102]

In addition to personal financial motives, a matter of great importance to all the colonists was their commercial interests. The prosperity and continued existence of Louisiana depended upon free trade with the French West Indies. Almost equally important was the trade with the Indians and the illegal trade with the English. Although the commercial decree of 1766 seems to have been issued in the interest of the consumers, all of them did not view it so. Moreover, the decree was a severe blow to the importers and greatly resented by them. Therefore, on September 8, the merchants of New Orleans, through Lafrenière, presented the Superior Council with a petition requesting a suspension of the order until the business interests could be heard.[103]

On September 12, the merchants and ship captains presented to the Superior Council another list of complaints against Ulloa's commercial policy, which was based on the belief that France had imposed certain restrictions on Spain at the time of the cession of the colony. Foucault, for example, wrote to the French minister of marine:

> It has not been the intention of his majesty on making cession, to strip for the benefit of Spain his loyal subjects of the privileges and exemptions which they have always enjoyed.[104]

Apparently nothing could convince the colonists that the cession of the territory to Spain was serious and conclusive, although the evidence clearly left no room for doubt. This was probably due to the realization that under the rule of Spain strict enforcement of the rigid Spanish colonial trade laws could be expected. To justify their rejection of the cession Louisianans were determined to give Louis XV's letter to d'Abbadie much more importance than it really had. They looked upon it as a sort of restrictive Magna Charta on the King of Spain. Nevertheless, the letter had no binding effect whatsoever on Charles III.[105]

The petitioners held that the decree would destroy the Louisiana economy in several ways. First, the ordinance would deprive them of their only lumber market, which for many years had been the sugar islands of Santo Domingo and Martinique. Second, furs, which were an important export of the colony, were of little value in Spain. Third, Spain could be supplied with sugar, wood, and indigo from Cuba, Peru, and other Spanish possessions. Finally, it was maintained that permitting ships to use only the northeast pass at the mouth of the Mississippi River would result in the possible wreckage of their ships.[106] While the Superior Council did not act on these petitions, Aubry agreed to suspend execution of the decree.

In demonstration of the importance attached by the colonists to the commercial regulations issued in 1768, Aubry declared that the greatest possible advantage for the colony could be derived from freedom to trade with France and the West Indies. Foucault expressed the same opinion. Pedro Caresse regarded the commercial decree of 1768 as the direct cause of the revolt.[107]

However, any attempt to determine the causes of the revolt of 1768 also must take into account the personality of Ulloa. The

Spanish governor was a man of merit, a distinguished scholar, but completely lacking in the tact required of a commander of a people opposed to a change of rulers. The governor was high-handed in his dealings with the colonists, and governed the French inhabitants in a strange manner.[108]

Among other things Ulloa was isolated from the people by his intellect; he prided himself on his birth and scholarly achievements, obviously feeling himself superior to the people he was sent to govern. He had come to the colony with the preconceived idea that the colonists would willingly change their nationality, their allegiance, and their flag. He also assumed that the French troops in Louisiana would readily enlist in the Spanish service since Louis XV had given them permission to do so. Finally, Ulloa was apparently convinced that it was a condescension that Louisiana should be ruled by such a man as he. He soon learned that Louisianans were not overjoyed at becoming Spanish subjects and that French soldiers refused to enlist in the Spanish service despite the urgings of Aubry. The colonists knew nothing of Ulloa's fame, were unawed by his presence, and greeted him sullenly and coldly, rather than with cheers.[109]

Aubry, who had no reason to represent Ulloa's actions in an unfavorable light, declared that hatred of Ulloa was one of the causes of the revolt. Furthermore, according to Aubry, this animosity was general. Ulloa had aroused the people by his despotism and by his flagrant violations of French laws and customs. This is illustrated by Aubry's letter of March 20, 1769, in which he remarked:

> Mr. Ulloa has introduced into the government of the colony some ideas little analogous to the French nature, so that the inhabitants and savages fear this domination . . . Mr. Ulloa is a man full of merit, of learning, of talent, but . . . he is extremely hasty and . . . would not listen sufficiently to the representations that were made to him, which caused discontent among those that had transactions with him. Mr. Aubry has cautioned him that the inhabitants . . . must be led by gentleness, that in receiving them with honor and with feeling one could do with them what one pleased, but if they were governed despotically . . . they might abandon their land to go over to the English. Mr. Aubry thought that he must make this remark to Mr. Ulloa because he had found out that the inhabitants murmured at the despotism and haughtiness with which he governed.[110]

It is evident that Ulloa, due to his personality, his lack of military superiority, the poor economic condition of the colony, the merchants' fear of the Spanish trade laws, and the hostility of the Superior Council, had little chance of success in governing Louisiana. Although the Spaniard was evidently sincere in his desire to be a good governor, he made far too many blunders. For example, Ulloa's refusal to deal with the Superior Council was to prove disastrous at a later date. Moreover, the unceremonious nature of his marriage was obviously not wise. Ulloa not only ignored the colony's ecclesiastics, but also deprived Louisianans of the spectacle and pageantry usually associated with the marriage of a governor or ruler. Thus the Spaniard and his bride were socially ostracized in New Orleans.

Perhaps Ulloa had no alternative, but his initiation of a divided government, through which he commanded and Aubry executed, was merely adding insult to injury as far as

the Louisianans were concerned. Finally, the imposition of harsh trade laws brought his pseudo-government tumbling down. It is clear that Ulloa was not the man to govern Louisiana which, at the time of his arrival, required a man of forceful character and governmental experience. Ulloa, on the other hand, was engrossed in scientific studies and his coming marriage. Only such a man would have listened fearfully to Aubry and drifted aimlessly along for two years, allowing the spirit of revolt to grow and mature.

By comparison, O'Reilly came to Louisiana with a predetermined course of action in mind. His first duty, as he saw it, was to put down a rebellion. Next he felt it necessary to punish those who had insulted the Spanish crown by their treatment of its representative. Furthermore, the punishment had to be of such a nature as to insure against any recurrence. Being a professional soldier, it was not in his nature to compromise and forgive, nor was he the type of man to leave a job unfinished, no matter how disagreeable. Finally, since the general's stay in the colony was to be comparatively brief, and it was possible that he would be succeeded by another weak governor, O'Reilly had to see that his replacement did not experience the same fate as Ulloa. Nevertheless, the scholar turned governor should not be judged too harshly for he was more acted upon by existing conditions than responsible for those conditions.

If history demands a villain, the choice must be Aubry, and not O'Reilly or Ulloa. It was Aubry who poisoned the mind and increased the timidity of Ulloa, which contributed to the aggressiveness of the French colonists. It was Aubry who created and kept alive the misunderstandings and mutual antagonism between Ulloa and the people. In addition, considerable funds passed from Ulloa to Aubry for the upkeep of the colony. Much of this money must have been retained by Aubry, which would possibly explain the wealth he took with him when he left the colony. It appears evident that the role of regent and protector of Ulloa was a very profitable one for Aubry, and it was to his interests that the arrangement whereby he executed Ulloa's commands continue indefinitely. The influence exerted by Aubry upon O'Reilly and the part he played as informer against his fellow countrymen also are indisputable facts. O'Reilly's sternness and unwillingness to compromise were heightened by the influence of the Frenchman.

While the actions of Aubry and Ulloa contributed to the insurrection, the basic causes were still economic in nature. Even so, many historians have dealt extensively with the patriotism of the French colonists, their desire to remain French, the weaknesses of Ulloa, and the duplicity of Aubry. Although these factors did play a part, they were not sufficient to cause rebellion. The dual government of Ulloa and Aubry, for example, was adequate for almost two years despite its weaknesses. Ulloa's character was no weaker two years later than it had been when he arrived. Why, then, did an insurrection not break out earlier? The answer is that an uprising did not occur until Ulloa began to tamper with economic affairs. The commercial regulations which Ulloa issued were the real causes of the revolution.

The Spaniard's first commercial decree issued on September 6, 1766, was so resented that an armed disturbance at this earlier date was prevented only by the fact that Aubry was persuaded to suspend the execution of the decree. However, when Ulloa, in 1768, forbade trade with the French West Indies and limited the colonial commerce to a few Spanish ports, the Frenchmen waited no longer. They rebelled, not so much to remain sub-

jects of Louis XV, as to preserve their means of earning a livelihood.

The economic interpretation of the causes of the revolution is opposed to the writings of the majority of Louisiana historians, who, obsessed with the idea that the conspirators were patriots – men of lofty and noble ideas, forerunners of Washington, Jefferson, and Adams – have attempted to eulogize Lafrenière and the others. However, the official Spanish trial records reveal that they do not deserve eulogy. Each conspirator, questioned privately, frequently lied and accused others in an attempt to escape the gallows. These are hardly the acts of fearless patriots. Moreover, the accused admitted most of the charges against them; indeed they had little choice, for most of their actions were a matter of public knowledge. Considering the facts, and omitting romantic ideals, it is difficult to see how O'Reilly and the court could have failed to convict the conspirators.

The rebels failed to follow up their revolt with any concrete steps to consolidate their position. In March, 1769, Foucault deserted his fellow conspirators and denounced them in a letter to the French Cabinet. In April, the Spanish frigate, *Le Volant*, which had been left behind for repairs, was allowed to sail from New Orleans. After Ulloa's departure, his governmental staff – Loyola, Gayarre, and Navarro – remained behind unmolested. Although it is likely that the insurgents could have seized any and all defensive positions in the colony not one military post was taken nor a single fortification erected to oppose a possible future Spanish invasion.[111]

Despite apparent lethargy, the Frenchmen did consider the possibility of constructing an independent republic in Louisiana. Ulloa charged that even while the revolt was merely being contemplated, Bienville and Masan went to Pensacola in secret to secure assistance from the English governor and offered to form the colony into a republic under the protection of England.

Later, after Ulloa's expulsion, Marquis and several other leaders of the revolt thought seriously of establishing a republic. The situation was quite complicated: Louisiana was no longer a French colony; the people disliked the idea of living under Spanish rule; therefore a republic seemed the logical conclusion. It was thus proposed to expel Aubry and his few French troops, to proclaim New Orleans a free port, and to form a republic where the oppressed and needy of all the earth could find a refuge and a home. The chief of the republic was to be styled a protector. A bank, on the plan of that of Amsterdam or Venice, was to be created to furnish financial support to the commonwealth.[112]

This scheme became a subject for public discussion and was circulated within the colony through manuscripts and printed documents. Credit, therefore, must be given to Marquis as one of the first men in America to advocate the establishment of an independent republic. However, the plan did not materialize because the Frenchmen who had been perfectly willing to follow their leaders in the revolution against Ulloa were not favorable to having these same leaders as their rulers. In addition, the Frenchmen in Louisiana had little understanding of self-government. Thus support for the project was slow in developing, and the opportune moment quickly faded as O'Reilly and his troops drew nearer Louisiana with each passing day.

O'Reilly's installation of Unzaga's administration in 1770 marked the end of the affair that began when Louis XV ceded the colony of Louisiana to Spain in 1762. The question of whether O'Reilly was justified in

what he did, however, remains a debatable issue among historians. Some condemn O'Reilly for cold-blooded cruelty while others rather grudgingly concede that he could not have acted otherwise under the circumstances. Actually, the blame must be shared by those responsible for sending Ulloa to the Louisiana colony, for he was not constituted to be an effective or strong executive.

By some standards, O'Reilly's action does seem harsh, but treason is still punished by the death penalty. Certainly by eighteenth century standards, insofar as precedent[113] is concerned, the execution of six men, including Villère, who was killed while resisting arrest, and the imprisonment of six more for organized rebellion was light punishment, and under no circumstances could be called severe. Without doubt the trial and execution of the leaders of the Louisiana rebellion was approved by governmental opinion in Europe. It should be noted in this respect that Versailles was aware that the Louisiana colonists had been notoriously insubordinate and rebellious for years, often causing the government considerable concern. A certain element in the colony, among which were the leading rebels, must be classified as continual troublemakers.

The rebellion of the colonists was against constituted authority, for the French king had made it clear that he had ceded all his rights concerning the province to the King of Spain. There is no question that under Ulloa the Spanish flag was raised over the entire colony with the exception of New Orleans, the center of the revolutionary movement. Furthermore, all commerce, finance, and government had been carried on under Ulloa's supervision.

Finally, in evaluating the regime of the Spanish governor-general, it is significant that just as Iberville was the founder of French Louisiana, so O'Reilly was the founder of Spanish Louisiana. In the last analysis, Alejandro O'Reilly should be ranked with Iberville, Bienville, and Carondelet as one of the great governors of colonial Louisiana.

Notes

1. Alcee Fortier, *A History of Louisiana* (New York: Manzi, Hoynat and Company, 1904), pp. 142-143; Reuben Gold Thwaites, *France in America*, Vol. III of *The American Nation: A History*, ed. A.B. Hart (26 vols.; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1904-1918), p. 281.

2. Arthur S. Aiton, «The Diplomacy of the Louisiana Cession,» *American Historical Review*, Vol. XXXVI (July, 1931), p. 714.

3. Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-145; John Smith Kendall, *History of New Orleans* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1922), Vol. I, p. 17.

4. Henry E. Chambers, *A History of Louisiana* (Chicago: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1925), Vol. I, p. 265; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 148; George W. Cable, *The Creoles of Louisiana* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), p. 53; Thwaites, *loc. cit.*

5. Charles Gayarre, *History of Louisiana* (4 vols.; New Orleans: Armand Hawkins, 1885), p. 127; Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 268; François Xavier Martin, *The History of Louisiana From the Earliest Period* (New Orleans: James A.Gresham, 1882), p. 197.

6. Gayarre, *loc. cit.*; Cable, *loc. cit.*; Henry Rightor, *Standard History of New Orleans* (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1900), p. 21. In France Milhet went to see Bienville for aid in securing an interview with the Duke de Choiseul. The Foreign Minister did not allow Milhet to see the King because the cession of Louisiana had been Choiseul's own idea. Thus the effort failed and Bienville lived to see Louisiana become a Spanish province. It was late in 1767 before Milhet returned from France. Even though he had notified the colonists of the failure of his mission, his continued absence had helped to keep French hopes alive. His return only served to strengthen the resentment against Ulloa.

7. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-131; Kendall, *op. cit.*, p. 18; Cable, *op. cit*, pp. 55-56.

8. The Spaniard landed with only two companies of infantry, composed of about ninety men commanded by a Captain Peirnas. Joseph Loyola was commissary of war; Esteban Gayarre, comptroller; and Martin Navarro, treasurer.

9. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 131; Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

10. Gayarre, *loc. cit.*; Kendall, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

11. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169; Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-160.

13. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-162.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167; Edwin A. Davis, *Louisiana, A Narrative History* (Baton Rouge: Claitor's Book Store, 1961), p. 101; Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

15. Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

16. Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

17. John R. Ficklen and Grace King, *A History of Louisiana* (New Orleans: L. Graham Company, 1904), p 118; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 161; Rightor, *op. cit.*, p. 22; Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 279; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 175. While at the Balize, Ulloa proposed to take open possession of Louisiana, replacing the French flag with the flag of Spain. Aubry felt it unwise for that important cere-

mony to take place in such a remote place rather than in New Orleans but he finally consented to the proposal. Ulloa changed his mind and decided to await the arrival of the Spanish troops.

18. Noyan and Bienville were nephews of Bienville, founder of Louisiana. Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 175; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 186-187; Cable, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65; Rightor, *loc. cit.*, Vincente Rodriguez Casado, *Primeros años de la dominación española en la Luisiana* (Madrid: Institute Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo, 1942), pp. 443, 452, 458, 469, 474. This work contains the confessions of five of the accused conspirators and the testimony of Esteban Gayarre and Martin Navarro.

19. The leaders of the conspiracy usually met either at Masan's house or, more frequently, at a house belonging to the widow, Madame Pradel, who was Foucault's alleged mistress. The conspirators would arrive at night, one by one from different directions, to discuss their plans. They would end the evening with a luxurious banquet. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 392, 445-446, 475; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 188; Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 64; Grace King, *Creole Families of New Orleans* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1921), p. 181.

20. J. H. Schlarman, *From Quebec to New Orleans* (Belleville: Beuchler Publishing Company, 1929), p. 416.

21. James E. Winston, «Causes and Results of the Revolution of 1768 in Louisiana,» *The Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XV (January-October, 1932), pp. 181-213.

22. Casado, *op. cit.*, p. 479; Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 201; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 162. During the year 1768, Ulloa had taken from the Germans provisions, to the value of 1500 piasters, to feed the newly arrived Acadians.

23. J. Hanno Deiler, *The Settlement of the German Coast of Louisiana and the Creoles of German Descent* (Philadelphia: American Germanic Press, 1909), pp. 188-189; Manuel Serrano y Sanz (ed.), *Documents históricos de la Florida y la Luisiana, siglos XVI al XVIII* (Madrid: Imprenta de Fortanet, 1912), pp. 272-274. This work includes a compilation of two diaries. The first, by an unidentified author, covers the period from November, 1768, through March, 1769. The second diary records one additonal month, ending on April 20, 1769. It was written by Joseph Melchor de Acosta, the captain of the Spanish frigate, *Le Volant*.

24. Ulloa also believed that d'Arensbourg had been influenced by his relatives, Villère, commander of the German militia, and de Lery, commander of the militia in Tchoupitoulas. Villère was married to Louise de la Chaise, and de Lery to Marie de la Chaise, both granddaughters of d'Arensbourg. De Lery was a first cousin to Lafrenière, whose daughter was the wife of Noyan, the leader of the Acadians. Deiler, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

25. Rightor, *loc. cit.* There is some dispute as to the number of signatures. Schlarman records 530, Martin 550. The consensus of sources, including Gayarre and Fortier, sets the figure at 560. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-148; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 163; Rightor, *op. cit.*, p. 23; Joseph Wallace, *The History of Illinois and Louisiana Under the French Rule* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke and Company, 1893), p. 372. The petition, written by Lafrenière and Caresse, was printed by Denis Braud. In 1764 d'Abbadie had obtained for Braud the exclusive privilege of establishing a printing press and selling books in the colony. Braud's press, the first in the colony, was an important factor in the printing and distribution of the proclamations and proceedings of the revolutionists in 1768. Serrano y Sanz, *loc. cit.*; Henry P. Dart, «The Adventures of Denis Braud, First Printer of Louisiana,» *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XIV (July, 1931), p. 349; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 147; Rightor, *op. cit.*,

p. 21.

26. Casado, *op. cit.*, p. 444; Schlarman, *loc. cit.*; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 165; Ficklen and King, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

27. For the most part, the rebels were armed by Marquis, Jean Milhet, and Caresse. Marquis was appointed commander-in-chief and immediately assumed his new position.

28. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 444, 447; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 189; Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 66; Fortier, *loc. cit.*

29. Casado, *op. cit.*, p. 444; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 190; Cable, *loc. cit.*

30. Serrano y Sanz, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-273; Gayarre, *loc. cit.*; King, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

31. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 191; Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

32. Casado, *op. cit.*, p. 467; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 193; Serrano y Sanz, *op. cit.*, p. 273; King, *op. cit.*, p. 183. When the petition was delivered the only members of the Superior Council present were Foucault, Lafrenière, Hutchet de Kernion, de Launay, and Laplace. Other members were absent, allegedly because of sickness. The petition was not read at this time, but was referred to Hutchet de Kernion and de Launay, with instructions to report the next day. Because of the importance of the petition supernumerary members were appointed and attended the Council meeting on October 29. These additional members were Hardy de Boisblanc, Thomassin, Fleurian, Babe, Ducros, and Labarre. Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 193; Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 474-476; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 166; Martin, *loc. cit.*

33. He referred to the successful opposition of the British colonies in America to the Stamp Act, and he charged Ulloa with the usurpation of authority in matters concerning French subjects, the jurisdiction of which belonged only to the Superior Council. Lafrenière also charged that Ulloa had upheld the complaints of Negroes agains their masters. Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 202; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200.

34. Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-167; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 200-202.

35. Casado, *op. cit.*, p. 452; Serrano y Sanz, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-274; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 200-202, 205; Schlarman, *op. cit.*, p. 418; King, *op. cit.*, p. 184. Foucault expressed the opinion that none of the Spanish officers could legally be sent away from the colony by the Superior Council; however, Ulloa not having formally taken possession of Louisiana should not perform any of the duties of governor. Foucault also maintained that navigation should take place as before Ulloa's arrival, and that the Spanish should continue to supply New Orleans and the other posts with provisions. Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 168; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-204.

36. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 46, 478, Gayarre, *loc. cit.*; Fortier, *loc. cit.*

37. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-211; King, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-185; Martin, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-203; Serrano y Sanz, *op. cit.*, p. 276. Aubry's dispatch was entrusted to de Lapeurière, a Knight of Saint Louis. The report of the Superior Council was carried by La Sassier, a member of the Council; Bienville, a naval lieutenant appointed by the planters; and Milhet, chosen by the merchants. Bienville was barred from serving because of his military duties, and St. Lette, a merchant from Natchitoches, was named in his place.

38. Serrano y Sanz, *op. cit.*, p. 390; Fortier, *loc. cit.*; King, *op. cit.*, p. 185; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-213. This is the traditional version of events, various points of which are questioned by historians.

39. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 453, 456-457, 461-462,

464-465 Gayarre, *loc. cit*

40. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 449-450; Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 86; King, *loc. cit.*; Schlarman, *loc. cit.*

41. Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

42. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 214. In support of this charge, mention was made of Ulloa closing all the passes of the Mississippi River except one which he chose because he had forbidden pilots to spend the night on board vessels leaving or entering the river, thereby causing many accidents.

43. Serrano y Sanz, *op. cit.*, p. 288; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

44. Serrano y Sanz, *op. cit.*, p. 275; Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-205.

45. Ulloa held that the holes dug to supply the kiln with earth became full of putrid water which corrupted the air. He remained steadfast in this belief despite statements of physicians to the contrary.

46. Cable, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69; Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-199, 205; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-216.

47. Schlarman, *op. cit.*, p. 419; Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

48. O'Reilly was born in Ireland about 1722. He went to Spain as a young man to escape religious persecution, enlisted in the Spanish army and served with distinction in Italy. In 1765 he had the good fortune to save the life of Charles III during an insurrection in Madrid, thus becoming the King's favorite. In 1769 he was appointed governor-general of Louisiana. In 1774 he was given command of an expedition against Algiers. With forty ships, 350 transports, 30,000 men, and his breast glittering with military decorations, through the jealousy of his junior officers, he went down to defeat. Called out of retirement to fight in the Napoleonic Wars, he died on the way to the front. Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

49. Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 69; Wallace, *loc. cit.*; King, *op. cit.*, pp. 186-188; Schlarman, *loc. cit.* Rightor sets the number of ships at twenty-eight, and the number of troops at 4,500. Wallace records that O'Reilly had 2,600 troops. McGinty agrees with Fortier: twenty-four ships and 3,000 troops. Gayarre concurs with the count of twenty-four ships, but does not give any figure on troops. Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-209; Rightor, *op. cit.*, p. 24; Garnie William McGinty, *A History of Louisiana* (New York: Exposition Press, 1949), p. 70.

50. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 450, 468; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 283-284; Hodding Carter, *Lower Mississippi* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1942), p. 60; King, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

51. Casado, *op. cit.*, p. 455; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285; Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 60; King, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-190; Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

52. Thomas McCaleb (ed.), *The Louisiana Book* (New Orleans: R. F. Straughan, 1894), p. 35; Carter, *loc. cit.*; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 209; King, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

53. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-292; Chambers, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285; Fortier, *loc. cit.*; Albert Phelps, *Louisiana, A Record of Expansion* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1905), p. 118; Claude H. Wetmore, *Out of a Fleur-de-lis* (Boston: W. A. Wilde Company, 1903), p. 42.

54. Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 61; Clayton Rand, *Men of Spine in Mississippi* (Gulfport: The Dixie Press, 1940), p. 62.

55. Fortier, *loc. cit.*; Cayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

56. Fortier, *loc. cit.*; McCaleb, *loc. cit.*; McGinty, *loc. cit.*; Carter, *loc. cit.*

57. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

58. *Ibid.*, pp. 292-295; Phelps, *op. cit.*, p. 119; Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 73; King, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

59. Fortier, *op. cit.*; Rightor, *loc. cit.*; Phelps, *loc. cit.*

60. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 295; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

61. Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-211.

62. King, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-192; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 295-296; Rightor, *loc. cit.*; McGinty, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-71; Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

63. Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 63; Phelps, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120; Schlarman, *op. cit.*, p. 421. Specifically the general asked the names of the persons responsible for writing, printing, and circulating the «Decree of the Council» of October, 1768 and the «Memorial of the Inhabitants of Louisiana on the event of the 29th of October, 1768.»

64. Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 287; McCaleb, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37; Ficklen and King, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

65. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 302; Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.

66. Phelps, Fortier, Chambers, and Fickien maintain that Aubry could have answered that, since Ulloa had never taken possession of the province of Louisiana, only the King of France could rightly demand such information. O'Reilly, himself, had for the first time released the inhabitants from their oath of allegiance to France; how then could Aubry accuse them, before a Spanish governor, of being rebels and traitors? Gayarre maintains that if Aubry had contented himself with a brief answer stating that he had been appointed governor of Louisiana by the King of France, and that he could not believe that the King of Spain wished to turn him into a common informer, he probably would have stood higher in the estimation of both O'Reilly and posterity. Rightor concludes that nothing required Aubry to give any information to O'Reilly for as soon as the latter had taken possession of Louisiana Aubry's duties as governor ended.

67. According to Fortier, only Lafrenière, Noyan, Boisblanc, and Braud, the printer, were arrested at O'Reilly's home. However, Schiarman and Gayarre agree that nine were arrested by O'Reilly in his quarters. There is a discrepancy as to the total number arrested on August 21 for, since Villère was not arrested until later, only eleven conspirators could have been seized at this time. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 443, 452, 458, 469, 474; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 203; Rightor, *loc. cit.*; Schlarman, *loc. cit.*; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

68. Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 218; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 303-304; King, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

69. *Ibid.*

70. Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-219; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 305; King, *loc. cit.*; Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 450, 452, 458, 468, 482.

71. Judge Martin gives a different account of Villère's death, but Bossu's is more likely the true one. Champigny, also a contemporary of Villère, gives about the same account. According to Martin, Villère had been marked as one of O'Reilly's victims but his absence from New Orleans and the fact that he had been warned of impending danger made his arrest more difficult. After receiving Aubry's letter, Villère chose not to admit his guilt by attempting to escape, and set out for New Orleans. His wife, notified of his arrest and imprisonment, hastened to the city. As her boat approached the frigate it was

ordered away; she made her identity known and begged to see her husband. Her request was refused but Villère recognized his wife's voice and demanded to see her. He, too, was refused, and a struggle ensued in which he was bayoneted by his guards. The official Spanish report simply states that Villère died raving mad on the day of his arrest.

72. McGinty, *op. cit.*, p. 72; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-308; Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 288; Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 64; King, *op. cit.*, p. 194; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 219. According to Carter, 536 men out of 1,800 present had borne arms against Ulloa. The ratio of Spanish troops to colonists was at least one to three, even when including the women and children of Louisiana in the estimated population.

73. Phelps, *op. cit.*, p. 122; Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 374; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 308-309. On September 1, the day of Foucault's arrest, Aubry sent the French ministry in Paris an account of events in the colony since the arrival of General O'Reilly. He admitted revealing the names of the leading insurrectionists and praised O'Reilly's kindness and generosity for having arrested so few when so many had been involved in the rebellion. Fortier, *loc. cit.*; Phelps, *loc. cit.*; Chambers, *loc. cit.*

74. Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 375; McCaleb, *op. cit.*, p. 38; Ficklen and King, *op. cit.*, p. 126; Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 289; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 121; Phelps, *loc. cit.*

75. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 313; King, *loc. cit.*; McGinty, *loc. cit.*; Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 474-477. Unlike modern proceedings, in 1769 the judges descended into the cells of the accused and forced them to answer questions the jurists deemed proper in minute detail. The prisoners never saw the witnesses against them nor knew their names. The witnesses testified in secret and in like manner all evidence was taken and weighed.

76. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 477-478.

77. *Ibid.*, pp. 478-479; Serrano y Sanz, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-278.

78. Casado, *op. cit.*, p. 480.

79. *Ibid.*

80. *Ibid.*, p. 481.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 482.

82. *Ibid.*, p. 459, 482.

83. *Ibid.*, pp. 459, 469-470. According to Marquis, he again sought his commission from Aubry the following day. Again, several militia officers begged him to take command, but Marquis refused on the ground that he must first be commissioned by Aubry. Aubry, overhearing the conversation, told him that, being preoccupied with other duties, he had neglected the commission, but that Marquis might exercise the functions of commander while awaiting his official authorization.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 462.

85. *Ibid.*, pp. 469-470.

86. *Ibid.*, pp. 452-458.

87. *Ibid.*, pp. 443-444.

88. *Ibid.*, pp. 447-448.

89. *Ibid.*, pp. 450-451.

90. Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 244; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 318-319.

91. Chambers, *loc. cit.*; King, *loc. cit.*; Wallace, *loc.*

cit.

92. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 320; Fortier, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-224; Chambers, *loc. cit.*. The prosecutor denounced the acts of Lafrenière and Villère in particular. Although dead, Villère was represented before the court by «an attorney to his memory.» Chambers and Phelps maintain that, from all testimony extant, the guilt of the Frenchmen had been predetermined by O'Reilly with Aubry's able assistance, and that they were foredoomed to serve as examples to the people of Louisiana. They maintain that the examination and trial was conducted as a mere formality.

93. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-339; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 224; King, *op. cit.*, p. 196; Wetmore, *loc. cit.*; Rand, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62.

94. King, *loc. cit.*; Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 65; Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 208; Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 290. Tradition maintains that O'Reilly was secretly moved to compassion in favor of Noyan, Lafrenière's son-in-law. Noyan had been recently married, and his youth, inexperience, and other circumstances pleaded as strongly for him as the numerous friends who left no means unturned to save him. Certain comments by O'Reilly hinted that Noyan's escape would be condoned. When Noyan was informed of O'Reilly's suggestion, he refused to take advantage of his opportunity, saying that he would live or die with his associates.

95. Carter, *loc. cit.*; Wetmore, *loc. cit.*; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 342. Wetmore maintains that the public hangman cut off his right hand when he heard the decree, and O'Reilly, impressed by his act, amended the sentence to death by shooting. This is inaccurate, and is probably drawn from Dumont, who wrote a history of Louisiana in 1753. Dumont relates that when Louisiana was under the administration of the Company of the Indies, the office of hangman needed to be regularly and permanently filled. The office was offered to a slave named Jeannot, who refused it. When Jeannot saw that the French were determined to force him to act as hangman he seized a hatchet and cut off his right arm.

96. King, *loc. cit.*

97. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, pp. 342-343; Chambers, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-291; Phelps, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

98. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 343; Wallace, *op. cit.*, p. 376; Chambers, *loc. cit.*

99. Rightor, *op. cit.*, p. 26; Cable, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78; Wallace, *op. cit.*, pp. 376-377. Cable gives the exact date of O'Reilly's departure as October 29, 1770.

100. Winston, *op. cit.*, p. 183; Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

101. Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 163; Winston, *op. cit.*, p. 184

102. This idea is substantiated by Kendall and Cable, who maintain that French office holders particularly had reason to fear the loss of their positions under a new government. This element of the population had much to do with initiating the revolution. Kendall, *loc. cit.*; Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

103. Winston, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-189; Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 476-477; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 170; Rightor, *op. cit.*, p. 22; Ficklen and King, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

104. Gayarre, *loc. cit.*

105. *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172.

106. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 443-444; Winston, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-190; Davis, *loc. cit.*

107. Winston, *op. cit.*, p. 190; Casado, *op. cit.*, p. 444.

108. Winston, *op. cit.*, p. 187; Fortier, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

109. Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

110. Winston, *op. cit.*, p. 188; Gayarre, *op. cit.*, p. 181; Fortier, *loc. cit.*

111. Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 70; King, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

112. Casado, *op. cit.*, pp. 449-450, 467-468; King, *loc. cit.*; Cable, *op. cit.*, p. 71; Schlarman, *loc. cit.*

113. In 1767, Viceroy Matias de Galvez of Mexico faced a similar situation in the province of Guanajuato, and for this revolt he executed 85 persons, had 73 lashed, imprisoned 674, and banished 117 from the province. Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

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SOME EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FRENCH VIEWS ON LOUISIANA

By Pierre H. Boulle

In his *Essay on Manners*, Voltaire gave a brief history of the settlement of Louisiana by the French. The colony, he wrote, was originally claimed by a few French Canadians toward the turn of the century, after the Spaniards, who had failed to find gold in the district and were already in possession of too much American land, abandoned the area as useless to them. During its first years under the French flag, Louisiana stagnated. Its commerce was the monopoly of Antoine Crozat's floundering private company, and the king, concerned about his European possessions, showed little interest and gave even less encouragement to his new American colony. It was only after the death of Louis XIV that interest grew in France for the colony, as a result of the more or less «pernicious» ideas of John Law, whom Voltaire described as that «extraordinary man . . . [who] made the nation believe that Louisiana produced as much gold as Peru and that it would furnish as much silk as China.» Feverish plans were made under the impetus of Law to colonize the Mississippi Valley. Unfortunately, the *philosophe* added, few of the settlers who were sent from France survived the miserable conditions with which they were faced. The scheme proved a disaster and New Orleans, which had been planned as a magnificent new capital, remained a small, sorry-looking village hugging the banks of the Mississippi. Voltaire concluded his account on a pessimistic note: «Perhaps one day, if there are millions too many inhabitants in France, it will be advantageous to people Louisiana; but it is more likely that we will have to give it up.»[1]

As is frequently the case when one deals with Voltaire, an author who always appears to translate the feelings of his contemporaries into easily remembered epigrammatic statements, one has difficulty resisting the temptation to use his somewhat negative but wonderfully clear résumé of Louisiana's position as a shortcut to the opinion in which the colony was held toward the middle of the eighteenth century. Louisiana, one is tempted to say on the strength of Voltaire's description alone, was regarded by the French public with deep suspicion, as an unprofitable outpost with a murderous climate which, along with the unfavorable publicity to which the colony had been exposed as a result of the Mississippi Bubble, made its growth into a significant part of the empire in the near future very unlikely.

If Voltaire's essay is insufficient to make the modern reader conclude that the French regarded Louisiana with distaste, he only needs to read the description of that colony in *Manon Lescaut* to become convinced of it. Besides helping to remind the French reading

public of the unsavory transportation of vagabonds and other undesirables with which the beginnings of Louisiana were associated,[2] the 1731 bestseller had unflattering things to say about the colony. New Orleans was, according to Abbé Antoine-François Prévost, «a mere assemblage of a few poor cabins . . . made of planks and mud . . .» surrounded by «unknown reaches, desert or inhabited by wild beasts and savages equally barbarous.»[3] The colony's climate was such that a single night out in this «sterile countryside» was sufficient to kill the heroine of the story, and the hero might have suffered the same fate, had he not been needed to tell the tale.[4] After having read Prévost's romantic novel, how could his numerous readers fail to perceive Louisiana in an unfavorable light?[5]

It is, therefore, natural that so many historians have assumed that Louisiana was an unpopular colony in the eighteenth century. The theory permeates modern writing on Louisiana. As a motive for the 1762 cession, it replaces the heartless lack of concern of a worthless and corrupted Louis XV, blamed by earlier historians for the «shameful» transfer.[6] It is apparent in both French and American works, in general treatments of the colonial question as well as in more specialized monographs, and Voltaire's comments are frequently given as statements typical of the French view of Louisiana.[7]

There is no need here, I think, to point out that such a view, if it was held, was grossly inaccurate. The scholarship of the last sixty years has shown that, although the colony was always a burden to French finances, it was far from an economic and cultural desert. Given impetus by Governor Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil's careful administration, it had grown in the 1750's into a substantial producer of colonial goods and its capital had become a town of some size, where there existed some of the distractions and social events, many of the refinements of culture, and most of the amenities of life which could be found at the time in a minor French provincial capital.[8]

It remains to establish whether, during the Seven Years' War, the French shared, in fact, the view of Louisiana which Voltaire expressed in his *Essay on Manners*. Too much apathy was shown by the French public when the gift of Louisiana to Spain became known and, later, when the Revolution of 1768 appeared, for a short time, to reopen the question of this cession to contend that the French were genuinely concerned with this distant outpost of theirs.[9] However, it would be carrying the argument too far to conclude from this that all Frenchmen dismissed the colony as lightly as Voltaire appeared to do. It is my intention to show in this paper that voices were raised in favor of Louisiana and that, although they had little effect in the long run on French policy, these voices were more numerous than has generally been thought and, in certain cases, came from surprising quarters.

The first thing to note is that accounts of visitors directly contradicted the views expressed by Voltaire and by Abbé Prévost. Jean-Baptiste Bossu, an officer who traveled through Louisiana during the 1750's and early 1760's, sent back to France reports which would not seem amiss in the most lyrical accounts of antebellum Louisiana. New Orleans, he said, was a city with «well-laid-out streets» where pure French was spoken, a certain sign that its inhabitants had reached a significant level of culture. It was, however, for the countryside immediately surrounding New Orleans that Bossu reserved his most favorable comments, particularly for the shores of the Mississippi, whose «pure and delicious waters flow forty leagues among numerous plantations, which offer a delightful scene on both

banks of the river, where there is a great deal of hunting, fishing and other pleasures of life.»[10]

Until his account was published in 1768,[11] some years after the cession of the colony was known in France, Bossu's reading public probably consisted only of his correspondent's family and immediate circle of friends. It is unlikely, therefore, that his account had much effect on French public opinion. This, however, was not the case for the writings of Father Pierre François-Xavier de Charlevoix, a Jesuit and popular author of travelogues, who had visited Louisiana in the early 1720's and published an account of his trip and a description of New France in 1744.[12] Charlevoix saw Louisiana at its worst, immediately after the failure of Law's scheme. Therefore, he began his description of the settled area of Louisiana by dismissing the wildly optimistic reports which had led to the speculative fever of 1720.[13] However, he also noted that the antagonistic accounts which were currently circulating should be discounted as coming usually from persons who had not visited the area. «In a word, I have met with none, who have been on the spot, who have spoken disadvantageously of Louisiana . . .»[14] He blamed the failure of the colony on the emphasis which had been placed by the speculators on a fruitless search for gold. «No one regarded the fertility of the soil, or the productions it would yield with moderate toil, nor the importance of establishing a naval station on the Gulf of Mexico.»[15]

Perhaps even more widely read than Charlevoix's accounts were the reports of Jesuit missionaries on their work in North America and elsewhere. These *Relations*, as they were called, were either formal reports or more informal pieces, such as letters, deemed of interest to the European reading public and regularly published by the Jesuit Order as a means of propaganda and fund-raising. They contained a wealth of geographical, sociological, and historical material on the areas where Jesuits were active and they were read assiduously, especially by the more religious members of the public, those who gave money to the Jesuit missions and could, in this manner, know something of the work of the Jesuits and participate in it vicariously.[16] Since most of the missions run by French Jesuits in North America were in Canada, the *Relations* emphasized this colony. However, a few of their accounts dealt with the Mississippi Valley, and at least one of them, a letter written in 1750 by Father Louis Vivier, contained a lengthy description of the territory he saw on his way up the Mississippi River from New Orleans to his mission in the Illinois Territory.[17]

Vivier's description of the lower Mississippi Valley was quite favorable. The land was excellent and easily irrigated, thanks to the peculiarities of the river, which was higher than its surroundings. The agricultural products were plentiful and varied: «All kinds of vegetables . . . splendid orange trees . . . indigo, maize in abundance, rice, sweet potatoes, cotton and tobacco.»[18] In addition, the neighboring forests yielded a great amount of wood for construction and domestic animals were numerous. Even French grapes might be grown and wine made, for native wild muscat vines could be found. «You see from all these details that some commerce is possible in New Orleans.»[19] Indeed, commerce could be increased many times, especially if Louisiana tobacco, which the colony could grow in abundance, was to replace the much inferior kind which France was buying at that time from foreign merchants. To do this, he noted, «would save the money that goes out of the Kingdom for that product; and the colony would be settled.»[20] In fact, the only aspect of the lower Mississippi which Vivier did not

like was its climate, which «seems heavy to one who has recently landed.»[21]

Not even the New Orleans region, however, could compare with the Illinois Territory, for which Vivier reserved his most favorable comments. The missionary could find nothing wrong with the area, not even the weather. It was true that the humidity tended to reduce the yield of the wheat crop and that the frequent and extreme variations of temperature in the spring ruined the fruit trees more often than he would have wished; nevertheless, the climate could be compared to that of France.[22] And how productive was the land! Thanks to Indian corn, which, he said, «grows marvelously,» the area could feed three times its current population.[23] Furthermore, the grass was so good that not only did game abound, becoming the staple during the winter months, but domesticated cattle needed «neither care nor expense.»[24] Moreover, the cattle of the Illinois Territory were free from disease, so that «these animals . . . live a long time, and, as a rule, die only of old age.»[25] To round off the picture, Vivier made reference to the mineral wealth of the area, where not only salt but also borax and «very fine» lead could be found. Copper was also a distinct possibility, for large chunks of ore had been found in the streams. There were even some precious metals, though Vivier very wisely minimized this aspect by pointing out how small were the traces of silver and gold which had been found.[26]

The tales of travelers had a wide audience in the eighteenth century;[27] it is not surprising, therefore, to find the ideas of those who had seen Louisiana taken up by writers who had never been there. The arguments found in a treatise on commerce published in 1754 and attributed to Pierre-André O'Héguerty, an ex-official of Bourbon Island in the Indian Ocean and a member of the Academy of Nancy, were so similar to those of Vivier that one cannot but think that the Nancy academician had read the Jesuit's letter. Not only did O'Héguerty extol the virtues of the same products, but he condemned as well the use of English tobaccos by France and blamed on this and on the memories of the Law period the slow growth of the colony.[28] In short, he used Louisiana as an example of a colony retarded in its development by unsound commercial doctrines and the unwise application of state controls. A similar regret, that Louisiana's resources had not yet been sufficiently exploited, had already been expressed the previous year in the much more influential *Encyclopédie*.[29] Although this work contained articles on several individual French colonies, Louisiana was not among them. However, the economist, François Véron de Forbonnais, did refer to it when, in an article which he contributed, he condemned French merchants for their narrow-mindedness. Instead of weakening French commerce by continuing to invest in areas which were already glutted with capital and could not, therefore, yield much revenue, the merchants of France, he said, should have gone into new areas and found new uses for their money. Forbonnais identified Louisiana as one of several areas of commercial expansion which had been overlooked by the French. Forbonnais' article could not fail to be understood as an appeal to remedy the situation.[30]

To show that such arguments existed in print in the 1750's is not, however, to prove that they were understood (or even read), particularly by those who would necessarily be the most influential in deciding what was to be done about Louisiana – the secretaries of state responsible for governmental policy and the *commis* who served them in the various ministries. Fortunately, a closer link can be demonstrated to have existed between public opinion and governmental decision – that

furnished by the flow of letters and memoirs which were sent to the ministers and to their advisors by people making a conscious effort to influence policy. This particular group of documents will be surveyed in the remainder of this paper; the survey will be limited to the period 1758-62, not only because the Seven Years' War was the occasion for an unusually large number of such documents to be written, but also because it is in these years – from the entrance of the Duc de Choiseul in the ministry to the cession of Louisiana to Spain – that the fate of the colony was sealed.

It may be with some surprise that one finds Voltaire, whose pessimistic description of Louisiana has so often been quoted, to be among those who petitioned the government to keep that territory. «In truth,» he wrote in 1760 to the Comte d'Argental, a friend of his who was close to the seat of power, «you should inspire my taste for Louisiana to the Duc de Choiseul . . . [It has] the most beautiful climate in the world and . . . [yields] a thousand useful things . . . I declare to you that if I were young, in good health and had not built Ferney [his estate near Geneva], I would go and establish myself in Louisiana.»[31] The above letter has been discounted by historians of Louisiana; they regard it at worst as a belated expression of hypocritical regret and at best as untypical.[32] Yet it is not the only letter which Voltaire wrote in favor of the colony. Two days after he appealed to Argental, he repeated his argument to the Marquis de Chauvelin, another advisor of Choiseul.[33] Nor was this a new idea for him. As early as 1758, he had wished «that Canada were at the bottom of the Arctic Sea . . . and that we could occupy [ourselves] in Louisiana with the planting of cocoa, indigo, tobacco and mulberry trees, instead of which each year we pay to our enemies the English, who understand naval and commercial matters better than the Parisians, four million [*livres*] for our noses . . .»[34] And when the loss of Quebec was known in France, he wrote to Argental a letter, obviously meant to be read by Choiseul, in which he tried to console the minister by pointing out that «Louisiana was worth a hundred times as much . . .» as the whole of Canada.[35] While they do not really constitute an organized campaign in favor of Louisiana, these four letters reflect Voltaire's mild *idée fixe* on the subject of Canada and Louisiana, a view which their author made sure that Choiseul, who respected him, would learn about.

Voltaire was not alone in having this *idée fixe*. The same obsession appeared in the mad scheme which a certain Canon Beaudeau sent to Choiseul in 1759, after it had been ignored by the minister's predecessor, Abbé de Bernis.[36] What Beaudeau suggested was that North America be partitioned along more rational lines, a typically eighteenth-century solution to clashes between great powers. The specifics of the proposal were less sensible. The British, the author said, should be given the whole of America north of the 41st parallel while the French and the Spanish shared the area south of the 40th, the French retaining Louisiana and taking all territory east of it and the Spanish keeping the southwestern regions and regaining, in compensation for Florida, Gibraltar and the Island of Minorca, for which Great Britain would be given comparable posts in North Africa. Thus, claimed Beaudeau optimistically, not only would each power gain from the partition colonies more easily defensible because grouped, but a neutral zone, going from New York City to Philadelphia and extending across the whole of the continent, would separate the possessions of the Bourbon monarchs from those of the aggressive British.

Beaudeau had no doubt that his proposal would be well received by the interested par-

ties. He thought that the Spanish would jump at the military advantages offered them in Europe, and the British would be «flattered» to receive Canada which, for some unexplained reasons, had been «for a long time the object of their desire.»[37] It was France, however, which would get the best of the bargain, for it would receive the most productive regions. «There can be no doubt,» the author of the project wisely noted, «that cotton, silk, tobacco, indigo, wax, wool and wood for construction are worth a thousand times more than a few furs.»[38] When reduced to its simplest expression, Beaudeau's plan was for a swindle, meant to give France a vastly enlarged Louisiana which, along with the neighboring areas, was regarded by the worthy canon as the only region to have genuine value.

Not all proposals sent to the French ministers had the mad quality of Beaudeau's project. Following the capture of Louisbourg by the British in 1758, a number of memoirs were received which drew the logical conclusion from that defeat.[39] Not only, they argued, was Canada now indefensible, but it had never really been worth the money which had been sunk into it. Only its population was worth preserving. On the other hand, the Mississippi Valley, «this admirable country which produces in its different regions all the fruits of Europe and those of America . . .»[40] was in desperate need of population. Consequently, the memoirs suggested a gradual withdrawal of the inhabitants of Canada, under the protection of the army, before the northern colony was captured, and their resettlement in Louisiana, «to create there a colony capable of containing those of the English . . . to begin the cultivation of goods which do not grow in France or grow there in insufficient quantities . . . to open for us new branches of commerce and to continue the beaver trade.»[41] The proposal was a bold one, amounting to the uprooting of some 60,000 persons and their transmigration through some 1,000 miles of American wilderness. Yet it is significant that a similar, though more limited, project was proposed at approximately the same time by the military leaders of Canada.[42]

Neither the suggested military withdrawal nor the much more complicated population transfer was considered acceptable by the French government.[43] Canada fell in the following year and its population settled under British rule. However, other plans were submitted to remedy the population needs of the Mississippi Valley. One of the suggestions was that the crown transport to Louisiana those of its criminals who, by having been condemned to lengthy prison terms, «are as good as dead for society.»[44] Another project, similar in nature, advocated the salvage of deserters by sending them to Louisiana instead of executing them. «However necessary the death penalty might seem in order to discourage desertion,» the author of this plan wrote, «it is nevertheless very saddening to reflect on the execution, since the beginning of the century, of over sixty thousand men, most of whom would have become very good citizens, had they been able to obtain their pardon.»[45] The author of a third memoir proposed the establishment of a company which would be granted tracts of land in the colony and would import tenant farmers to work on them.[46]

The significance of these schemes is in their authors' inherent belief that the region of the Mississippi lacked only a large population to rival the wealthiest of the French possessions. Such a view was shared by many. In fact, praises for Louisiana came from the most improbable quarters, including the memorialists who wrote to advocate the interest of other colonies. One author, who favored West Indian commerce, described Louisiana as a huge potential supply center for the sugar islands.[47] Another advocate of the Caribbean

colonies was led, when reflecting upon the Mississippi Valley, to give it a significant compliment, although a back-handed one. «France must always keep this . . . colony,» he warned, «lest it ruin the commerce of our southern islands, as would soon occur if the English became masters of it.»[48]

In 1761, the French and the British made an effort to arrange peace terms.[49] It did not take long for news of this to reach the public, and a debate soon developed on whether France should try to regain Canada at the conference table. When it is remembered that one ploy used by those who suggested that Canada be abandoned was to compare unfavorably that colony with its southern neighbor, it becomes significant that those who were of the opposite opinion did not attempt to minimize the value of Louisiana. On the contrary, a large number of memoirs advocating the retention of Canada appealed to an opinion believed to be generally favorable to Louisiana by stressing the importance of the former for the defense of the latter. «I have said it and I repeat it,» one author stated, «Louisiana without Canada cannot remain in our hands.»[50] The same argument was made in the memoirs which certain ports sent to Choiseul when it was learned that the government, in a final effort to obtain peace, had made the offer to the British of all the French rights to Canada, which La Rochelle called «the key and the safety of America.»[51] One could almost say that the value of Louisiana came to be taken for granted in the 1750's. Indeed, toward the end of the period, the authors of memoirs no longer even bothered to argue the colony's worth; they merely referred to it. As one writer put it when he began an argument for the retention of Louisiana, «I will not detail here the importance of Louisiana for France, how useful it could have been and how little was made of its great means; these truths are too notorious to be worth discussing.»[52]

At the beginning of this paper, it was noted that the cession of Louisiana had been attributed by some to a lack of interest on the part of the French public for that colony. Yet it can be seen from this brief survey of public opinion that, during the Seven Years' War, a sizable group of individuals demonstrated their interest in the Mississippi Valley; Louisiana cannot have been abandoned for lack of a vocal lobby in its favor. Nor was the government as uninterested in the region as has been implied. When it became apparent that peace could not be gained without the loss of Canada, an effort was made to save as much of Louisiana as possible from the debacle. Although the lands east of the Mississippi had, in the end, to be given to the British, it took over a year after the beginning of negotiations for France to accept this rigorous demand of the victors.[53]

What then might have been the cause of the Louisiana cession, and particularly of the «free gift» of the regions west of the Mississippi to Spain? Various theories have been proposed. Some have argued that the financial drain of the war and the lack of immediate returns from Louisiana heavily influenced the government in getting rid of the colony; others have viewed its cession to Spain in terms of a «peace bribe»; I have suggested elsewhere that a role was played in the decision by a fear that the remnants of the colony could no longer be defended against the British.[54] None of these theories has yet been convincingly proven, nor are they likely to be in the near future. The difficulty lies in the documentation which is presently available on the Duc de Choiseul, whose ideas were shaping French policy toward the end of the Seven Years' War. Choiseul was a strong minister who tended to keep his own counsel, so that his official correspondence is an inadequate tool for the study of his thoughts. Yet, in their studies of this minister, scholars have been forced by the

unavailability of other sources to rely almost exclusively on the papers found in the various French governmental archives. Obviously, a look at Choiseul's private papers might give a new dimension to the study of this key figure in the first cession of Louisiana. Unfortunately, these papers are not available at present.[55] Not since the turn of the century have substantial fragments of the Choiseul Archives been published.[56] And these documents, which gave rise to the last complete study of the Duke's career,[57] are of small use to the student of Louisiana. However, the same source might yield more valuable documents. Until someone gains access to these, it is unlikely that the final word will be said on the subject of the first cession. What is certain is that one cannot entirely believe Choiseul's dismissal of Louisiana as a colony which had uselessly cost each year some 800,000 *livres*.[58] This sally did not express, as some have intimated,[59] a genuine feeling of relief on the part of the minister, nor was it a believable effort to seek an excuse for the cession of Louisiana. The lightness of the tone has been misunderstood to express a lightness of spirit which neither Choiseul nor most Frenchmen could possibly have felt in the middle of the eighteenth century.

Notes

1. *Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations*, chap. CLI, in François Marie Arouet de Voltaire, *Oeuvres complètes*, Louis Moland, ed. (Paris, 1877-85), XII, 411-412. It is only in the edition of 1761-63 that the *Essai* appeared in full for the first time, and in the edition of 1769, from which the text cited here has been taken, that it appeared in final form, with its present title. However, the *Essai* dates from an earlier period. A large segment of it was drafted as early as 1740 and various manuscript copies were circulating during the War of the Austrian Succession. The first edition was a pirated one, taken from such a copy and dated 1753. Therefore, although the passage cited here appeared in its present form only after the cession of Louisiana, it was composed before any thought was given to abandoning the colony. Voltaire, in a footnote to the 1769 edition, noted the accuracy of his prediction (*ibid.*, XII, 412n). For the publishing history of the *Essai sur les moeurs*, see *ibid.*, XI, i-xii.

2. *Manon Lescaut* was not the only reminder of this. The decision to eliminate mendicancy in France and the consequent rounding up of vagrants, prostitutes, and orphaned children begun by the Paris police in 1749 led the memorialist Barbier, a well-informed lawyer, to assume, along with the rest of the Parisians, that another population drive for Louisiana was underway (Edmond Jean François Barbier, *Chronique de la régence et du règne de Louis XV [1718-1763]; ou, Journal de Barbier, avocat au parlement de Paris* [Paris, 1857], IV, 401-403 [November, 1749]). For the underlying facts of this affair, which led to a serious riot in May, 1750, see René Louis de Voyer de Paulmy, Marquis d'Argenson, *Journal et mémoires du marquis d'Argenson*, E. J. B. Rathery, ed. (Paris, 1859-67), VI, 202-203 (May 27, 1750).

3. Antoine-François Prévost, *Histoire de Manon Lescaut et du chevalier des Grieux* (Paris, 1931), pp. 176, 177, 183.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 187-189.

5. The impact of Prévost's work on French imagination, as well as the numerous errors of the author in his description of Louisiana, are commented upon in Gilbert Chinard, *L'Amérique et le rêve exotique dans la littérature française au XVII^e et au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1934), pp. 301-306.

6. Alcée Fortier, *A History of Louisiana*, I (2nd ed., Jo Ann Carrigan, ed., Baton Rouge, 1966), 138, 140, 327-328. See also Charles Gayarré, *History of Louisiana: The French Domination* (New York, 1867), II, 94.

7. George Hardy, *Histoire sociale de la colonisation française* (Paris, 1953), p. 55; Emile Lauvrière, *Histoire de la Louisiane française, 1673-1939* (Paris, 1940), p. 395; Carl Ludwig Lokke, *France and the Colonial Question; A Study of Contemporary French Opinion, 1763-1801* (New York, 1932), p. 41; E. Wilson Lyon, *Louisiana in French Diplomacy, 1759-1804* (Norman, Okla., 1934), pp. 34-35.

8. On this subject, see the work of Guy Frégault, *Le Grand marquis: Pierre de Rigaud de Vaudreuil et la Louisiane* (Montreal and Paris, 1952); and the documents cited by A. Baillardel and A. Prioulx in *Le Chevalier de Pradel; vie d'un colon français en Louisiane au XVIII^e siècle d'après sa correspondance et celle de sa famille* (Paris, 1928). See also Baron Marc de Villiers du Terrage, *Les Dernières années de la Louisiane française* (Paris, 1904), p. 147; Nancy Maria (Miller) Surrey, *The Commerce of Louisi-*

ana During the French Regime, 1699-1763 (New York, 1916), especially pp. 27 and 207-218; and Lauvrière, *op. cit.*, pp. 386-387.

9. For a study of this, see my «French Reactions to the Louisiana Revolution of 1768,» in John Francis McDermott, ed., *The French in the Mississippi Valley* (Urbana, Ill., 1965), pp. 143-157. Lauvrière contends that the difficulties which Governor Kerlérec was given upon his return to France in 1763 were due to the public outcry which the losses in North America raised in France and that he narrowly escaped the fate of Lally-Tollendal who was made the scapegoat for the loss of India and executed in 1766 (*op. cit.*, p. 396). Such a comparison has doubtful validity. No military reverses had been suffered in Louisiana and that colony's cession was not yet generally known. The ex-governor of Louisiana was reproached, not for having contributed to the loss of the colony under his command, but for the fact that he and Intendant Rochemore had, through their quarreling, caused the administration of Louisiana to be disrupted and permitted corrupt practices to exist. Kerlérec, unlike Rochemore, was not personally guilty of corruption, but his colleague was dead and, therefore, beyond the reach of public anger. The case of Kerlérec can best be understood in terms of the Canadian trial which was taking place at the time. Kerlérec suffered because of a sudden public distaste for colonial mismanagement, occasioned by the daily more precise details which were beginning to be received about the Canadian intendant, Bigot, and his clique.

10. Letter II (July 1, 1751), in Jean-Baptiste Bossu, *Travels in the Interior of North America, 1751-1762*, Seymour Feiler, ed. and trans. (Norman, Okla., 1962), pp. 23-24.

11. *Ibid.*, p. ix.

12. Pierre François-Xavier de Charlevoix, *Journal of a Voyage to North America*, Louise Phelps Kellogg, ed. and trans. (Chicago, 1923), I, xxiii-xxv. The *Journal* was originally published at the end of Charlevoix's *Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle France.*

13. Charlevoix, *Journal of a Voyage to North America*, II, 271.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 281.

15. Charlevoix, *History and General Description of New France*, John Gilmary Shea, ed. and trans. (New York, 1866-72), VI, 12.

16. Chinard, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-125.

17. Father Vivier to another Jesuit father, November 17, 1750, in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791* (Cleveland, 1896-1901), LXIX, 200-229. Vivier's letter was first published in the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses* (Paris, 1703-76), probably in vol. XXVIII (1758). For fuller biographical information on this, see Thwaites, *op. cit.*, LXVI, 298-312. In Thwaites's edition, the original French text and the English translation are placed on alternate pages, the French on even-numbered pages and the English on odd-numbered ones. I have usually used the printed English text. In some instances, however, the translation was unsatisfactory. Whenever I have used my own translation, I refer directly to the French text and cite the even-numbered pages.

18. Thwaites, *op. cit.*, LXIX, 211.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 214.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 217.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 211.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 217, 219. Vivier had gone even fur-

ther in an earlier letter, claiming that the Illinois winter «is shorter and more broken . . .» than the French one and the summer only slightly warmer (Father Vivier to Father * * *, June 8, 1750, *ibid.*, p. 142). It is clear that Vivier had not yet gone through a midwestern winter and that he relied on hearsay for his comments on the weather.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 219.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 220.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 221.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 221, 223.

27. Chinard, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-190.

28. M. D. . ., *Essai sur les intérêts du commerce maritime* (The Hague, 1754). Emile Garnault, who identifies O'Héguerty as the author of this work, reproduces the pages of the *Essai* dealing with the French colonies in his *Le Commerce rochelais au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris and La Rochelle, 1887-1900), IV, x-xvi. Garnault gives a short sketch of O'Héguerty's life on pp. ix-x; the section of the *Essai* dealing with Louisiana is reproduced on pp. xiv-xv.

29. For the impact of the *Encyclopédie* on the French public see Louis Trénard, «Le Rayonnement de l'*Encyclopédie* (1751-1789),» *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale*, IX (1966), 721-733.

30. [François Victor] V[éron] D[uverger de] F[orbonnais], «Compagnie de commerce» (1753), *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, eds. (Paris and «Neufchastel,» 1751-65), III, 739-740. Forbonnais signed his articles only by his initials; he is identified in Jacques Proust, *Diderot et l'Encyclopédie* (Paris, 1962), p. 116. Another *philosophe* who ought to be mentioned here is Montesquieu, the most mercantilist of them, who regarded all tropical colonies, among which he included Louisiana, with particular favor. However, although his views on Louisiana can be inferred from the *Spirit of the Laws* (cf. XXI, 1), it is only in a piece published much later than he specifically mentioned the colony (Charles Louis de Secondat, Baron de la Brède et de Montesquieu, *Oeuvres complètes*, Roger Caillois, ed. [Paris, 1949-51], I, 1490). Because of the late date of [Auguste Chambon], *Le Commerce de l'Amérique par Marseille* (Avignon, 1764), I have also ignored that work, despite the particularly favorable view of Louisiana which it contains (II, 81, 87). For a study of the specialized eighteenth-century literature on Louisiana, see John R. Carpenter, *Histoire de la littérature française sur la Louisiane de 1673 jusqu'à 1766* (Paris, 1966).

31. Letter of November 1, 1760, in François Marie Arouet de Voltaire, *Correspondence*, Theodore Bestermann, ed. (Geneva, 1953-65), XLIV, 113 (letter no. 8609).

32. Lauvrière, *op. cit.*, p. 395; Lyon, *op. cit.*, p. 35. On the other hand, Walter L. Dorn, in his general history of the period, makes a passing reference to the letter as though it were the only view expressed by Voltaire (*Competition for Empire, 1740-1763* [New York, 1940], p. 260.). Only Lokke deals fully with the writings of Voltaire on Louisiana, but he sees no contradiction between the *philosophe's* letters and the *Essay on Manners* which he regards as favorable to the colony (*op. cit.*, pp. 41-42).

33. Letter of October (i.e., November) 3, 1761, in Voltaire, *Correspondence*, XLIV, 122 (letter no. 8615).

34. Letter to Jean Robert Tronchin, May 5, 1758, *ibid.*, XXXIII, 220 (letter no. 7026).

35. Letter of November 24, 1759, *ibid.*, XXXVII,

232 (letter no. 7882).

36. «Projet de partage de L'Amérique Septentrionale entre Les françois Les anglois et Les Espagnols,» 1757, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (hereafter AE), Mémoires et Documents, Amérique, 10, ff. 298-299.

37. *Ibid.*, f. 298v. Beaudeau argued that Great Britain would give up its southern colonies willingly in exchange for Canada; they were, he said, «Les moins florissantes et Celles dont L'habitation Leur est La moins agréable.»

38. *Ibid.*

39. These memoirs are all anonymous, but it is clear, despite the difference in their language, that they originated from a single source, either one man or several who had discussed their ideas. I will, therefore, treat the memoirs as a single project. However, for the convenience of the reader, here is a list of the various drafts: «Mémoire sur la Louisiane,» 1756 (i.e., 1758), Archives Nationales, Fonds des Colonies (hereafter AN, Colonies), F^3, XXV, 1-8; «Essai sur Les moyens De Transporter à la Louisiane La peuplade Du Canada en cas qu'on prit Le parti De le Ceder aux Anglois, ou De L'abandonner,» September, 1758, AN, Colonies, F^4, XXII, 83-100^{bis}; Memoirs Nos. 10 and 11, 1758, AE, Correspondance Politique, Etats-Unis, Supplément 6 (hereafter Corr. Pol., EU, Suppl. 6), ff. 61-66v.

40. AE, Corr. Pol., EU, Suppl. 6, f. 62.

41. AN, Colonies, F^4, XXII, 83.

42. When, late in 1758, Montcalm sent Bougainville to France to explain to the government the critical situation of the colony, he proposed, as one alternative, that the military forces of Canada withdraw to Louisiana. Bougainville, «Réflexions sur la compagne prochaine,» December 20, 1758, in Pierre Georges Roy, ed., «La Mission de M. de Bougainville en France en 1758-1759,» *Rapport de l'archiviste de la Province de Québec pour 1923-1924*, P. G. Roy, ed. (Quebec, 1924), pp. 17-18.

43. «. . . Retraite à la Louisiane admirée, non acceptée.» Bougainville to Montcalm, March 18, 1758 (i.e., 1759), in Henri Raymond Casgrain, ed. *Lettres de la cour de Versailles au baron de Dieskau, au marquis de Montcalm et au chevalier de Lévis* (Quebec, 1890), p. 104. Someone in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made a critical analysis of the memoirs suggesting the mass migration from Canada and concluded against them («Examen du Projet de faire passer les habitans du Canada a la Louisiane,» February 8, 1759, AE, Corr. Pol., EU, Suppl. 6, ff. 39-46). An effort was made in 1761 by two different persons to have the project reconsidered («Memoire sur la Transmigration proposée du Canada a la Loui[sian]e,» April, 1761; «Sur la Louisiane,» same date; «Moyen de peupler la Louisiane: Encouragements à donner aux habitants du Canada pour passer au Mississipy,» June, 1761, AE, Corr. Pol., EU, Suppl. 6, ff. 49-59, 67-72, 74-74v). This was to no avail.

44. Rivoire, «Mémoire sur la Louisiane Envoyé a Monsieur Berrier Ministre de la Marine, le 15 avril 1761,» AN, Colonies, C^{13} B, vol. I, no. 65, p. 7.

45. Anonymous, «La Louisiane» (ca. 1761), AN, Colonies, C^{13} C, I, 32-33.

46. Henri Pouillard, «Plan de Population et d'Augmentation du Commerce a la Louisiane et a Cayenne Colonies Françaises dans L'Amérique septentrionales et Méridionales,» 1761, AN, Colonies, F^3, XXI, 267-283.

47. Anonymous, Memoir on Saint-Domingue, undated (between 1756 and 1759), AN, Colonies, C^9 C, IV.

48. Anonymous, «Importance de la Colonie de l'Isle Royale pour la France,» 1758, AN, Colonies, C^{11} C, XVI.

49. The effort was in vain and the negotiations, which had begun in April, ended in November. For more details, see Edouard de Barthélemy, «Le Traité entre la France et l'Angleterre (1763),» *Revue des questions historiques,* XLIII (1888), 447-453; and Max Savelle, *The Diplomatic History of the Canadian Boundary, 1749-1763* (New Haven, Conn., and Toronto, 1940), pp. 103-124.

50. Jean-Daniel Dumas, «Mémoire sur les limites du Canada,» April 5, 1761, AN, Colonies, C^{11} E, VIII, 197.

51. Chamber of Commerce (hereafter CC) of La Rochelle to Choiseul, November 14, 1761, in Garnault, *op. cit.*, IV, 309. See also Judge and Consuls of Nantes to CC Dunkirk, December 20, 1761, and CC Guienne to Choiseul, December 22, 1761, in Pierre Georges Roy, ed., «Les Chambres de commerce et la cession du Canada,» *Rapport de l'archiviste de la Province de Québec pour 1924-1925,* P. G. Roy, ed. (Quebec, 1925), pp. 225-226. France learned of the extent of what had been offered through the publication of a *Mémoire historique sur la négociation de la France et de l'Angleterre* by Choiseul, who hoped thereby to anger the French into a renewal of their fighting will. The terms which had been offered appalled the merchants of certain ports who were moved to write the memoirs cited above.

52. [Marquis d'Aubeterre?], «Observations Topographiques sur l'intérêt de l'Espagne dans la presente Négociation, relativement à ses possessions dans l'Amérique septentrionale,» July 26, 1762, AE, Mémoires et Documents, Amérique 33, f. 62v. See also a similar statement in Rivoire, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

53. See AE, Corr. Pol., EU, Suppl. 6, a register of documents containing all the memoirs received and framed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the question of the Canada-Louisiana frontier between the start of negotiations in March, 1761, and the signing of the Fontainebleau Preliminaries which sealed the fate of Louisiana in November, 1762. From a survey of these documents, it is clear that the boundaries of the area to be given to Great Britain were only grudgingly extended to the Mississippi River. See also Savelle, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-144.

54. Boulle, *op. cit.*, p. 156. Other opinions are reviewed in the «Commentary» of Professor Carrigan, in Fortier, *op. cit.*, I, 327-332.

55. John Fraser Ramsay, who deplores this lack, assumes, on totally insufficient evidence, that the Choiseul Papers were destroyed (*Anglo-French Relations, 1763-1770; a Study of Choiseul's Foreign Policy* [Berkeley, Calif., 1939], p. 236).

56. Pierre Calmettes, *Choiseul et Voltaire* (Paris, 1902); Fernand Calmettes, ed., *Mémoires du duc de Choiseul, 1719-1785* (Paris, 1904), originally published in the *Revue de Paris.*

57. Gaston Maugras, *Le Duc et la duchesse de Choiseul; leur vie intime, leurs amis et leur temps* (Paris, 1902), and *La Disgrâce du duc et de la duchesse de Choiseul; la vie à Chanteloup, le retour à Paris, la mort* (Paris, 1903). The shorter study by Roger H. Soltau dates from the same period and is also based in part on these documents (*The Duke of Choiseul* [London, 1909]).

58. Choiseul to Ossun, September 20, 1762, in W. R. Shepherd, «The Cession of Louisiana to Spain,» *Political Science Quarterly,* XIX (1914), 447.

59. Hardy, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

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LOUISIANA AS A FACTOR IN FRENCH DIPLOMACY FROM 1763 TO 1800

By Mildred Stahl Fletcher

It has generally been assumed that the retrocession of Louisiana to France by the treaty of San Ildefonso, October 1, 1800, was the culmination of a consistent policy of the French governments during the preceding thirty-seven years to re-establish a colonial empire in America. This view has been sponsored by Henry Adams, F.P. Renaut, Albert Sorel, and F.J. Turner.[1] Of these Mr. Turner alone cites authority to prove that France had persistently desired to recover Louisiana, but his argument depends upon a memoir published in 1802, supposedly the work of Vergennes,[2] and a statement in the memoirs of Godoy, to the effect that Vergennes had attempted to buy Louisiana.[3] P.C. Phillips and E.S. Corwin had proved quite conclusively that Vergennes was not the author of this memoir and that Godoy writing his memoirs in 1832 was hardly in a position to speak with authority of the period preceding his tenure of office.[4] There is no evidence that Vergennes, or his successors from February, 1783 to March, 1793, through correspondence with the French ministers to Spain attempted to recover Louisiana.[5] Nor does the correspondence with the French ministers to the United States from 1778 to 1789 disclose any plans to advance France territorially in the Mississippi Valley.[6] The same may be said of the correspondence of the Spanish ambassador to Paris during the period from 1787 to 1791.[7]

From the peace of 1763 to 1783 French policy in North America was dictated by an effort to humiliate Great Britain by disturbing her colonial empire in America. After 1778 the main purpose was to retain both Spain and the thirteen colonies in close alliance. The first policy explains the presence of Choiseul's agents in this country and the alliance with the colonies in 1778.[8] The second explains Luzerne's attempt to influence the Continental Congress to give up the demand for the territory between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi River,[9] the instructions of Congress to the Commissioners of Peace that they be directed in their negotiations by Vergennes,[10] and Rayneval's proposal to Jay to preserve the land west of the mountains and south of the Ohio River as Indian territory, with the southwestern part under the influence of Spain and the northwestern part under the influence of the United States.[11] Likewise the French ministers to the United States from 17[illegible] to 1789, Marbois, Otto, and Moustier, were carefully instructed to remain completely neutral even to the extent of refusing to act as mediators in the controversy which had arisen between Spain and the United States over the navigation of the Mississippi.[12]

France had given Louisiana to Spain in 1763 without reluctance and Spain had re-

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ceived it without enthusiasm. As a French colony it had not paid the expenses of administration nor was it destined to do so under Spanish rule.[13] The half-hearted attempts made by France previous to the Treaty of 1783 to curb American ambitions for the territory in the Mississippi Valley and her refusal to support our contentions with Spain for the navigation of the Mississippi after the treaty were not designed to enable France ultimately to regain Louisiana, but to guarantee the territorial integrity of her Spanish ally and to preserve a balance of power in America, insuring thereby a dependence of America upon France.

With the change of the French government in 1789, attempts were made to secure Louisiana from Spain and they continued with increased vigor after April, 1795. These efforts were not the result of a consistent policy and, even from 1795 to the treaty of retrocession in 1800, the motive changed in negotiating for the acquisition of the territory. Sorel states, without authority, that Bourgoing suggested the retrocession of Louisiana in 1790 when he attempted to replace the Family Compact by a national pact during the Nootka Sound crisis.[14] Likewise Sorel quotes a memoir of Dumouriez instructing Talleyrand in 1792 to propose in London a partition of Spanish colonies in the New World between France and England in order to create an animosity between the latter and Spain and to prevent their allying in a war against France.[15] When war seemed imminent between France and the two allied powers, Genêt's mission to the United States was planned. His proposal for attacks on Florida and Louisiana was a means of making war on Spain and had he been successful there was, with one exception, no definite plan for the disposal of any territory that might have been acquired. The exception did provide in case of any success in Canada «that star might be added to the American constellation.»[16] It would seem therefore that the primary motive of French North American policy from 1790 to 1795, if we discount Sorel's unauthenticated statement of Bourgoing's overture to Spain, was not to establish a colonial empire, even though a successful termination of Talleyrand's mission to London or Genêt's attack on Louisiana might have made such a policy necessary.

After a series of negotiations with Prussia, Spain, Austria, and England, France made peace with Prussia on April 5, 1795 and with Spain on July 22 of the same year, but continued negotiations for a closer alliance with Spain and the acquisition of Louisiana during the two years following, Austria was forced to accept peace by the Treaty of Campo Formio in 1797. Peace with England remained nebulous because of a number of complications. If France was to retain the left bank of the Rhine, England must be compensated. Since the French constitution forbade the alienation of territory, England could be compensated only at the expense of France's allies, either the Batavian Republic or Spain. Unfortunately the territories of these two countries were guaranteed by the treaties of 1795. It is out of these circumstances which prevented immediate peace with England that Raymond Guyot explains the persistent attempts on the part of the French to acquire Louisiana, beginning with the negotiation with Spain immediately after the Treaty of Basle and continuing up to the time when the acquisition of Louisiana became involved in the Bonaparte-Talleyrand schemes of empire.[17]

In the instructions to Barthélemy, who with Yriarte arranged the Treaty of Basle with Spain in 1795, the Committee of Public Safety asked for the cession of Louisiana, al-

though in framing the instructions for Servan, who took up the negotiation with Grando at Bayonne, they granted him authority to yield all demand for territory.[18] Barthélemy's instructions were framed after the receipt of a letter from Fauchet, the minister to the United States, which urged the acquisition of Louisiana either by diplomacy or war,[19] in order to secure the dependence of the Americans upon the friendship of the French, a thing which had been jeopardized recently by the Jay Treaty, and still further threatened by the Pinckney negotiations at Madrid. It is possible that Fauchet's letter was instrumental in getting the Committee to draft an instruction for Barthélemy covering Louisiana. It is also possible that the conversations of William Wickham, the Bristish minister to Switzerland, with the emmissaries from all parties in France,[20] made the Committee aware that England was feeling for peace, and in that event they realized that Louisiana was good trading material.[21] Barthélemy and Yriate reached an agreement on July 22, the former yielding on the question of Louisiana and accepting San Domingo as a substitute.[22]

The Directory, which succeeded the Committee of Public Safety in power, October 25, 1795, took up the thread of negotiation for Louisiana after an exchange of notes between Wickham and Barthélemy.[23] Pérignon was instructed to secure a closer alliance with Spain and the retrocession of Louisiana, in return for which the Directory would engage itself to procure Gibraltar by all possible means, to neglect nothing in order to restore Spanish rights to fish in Newfoundland, and to provide a kingdom for the Duke of Parma. A memoir attached to these instructions represented the colony as menaced by the infiltration of Americans and ended by saying «cette acquisition en preparent de grandes difficultes à l'Angleterre doit amener à une paix solide et avantageuse.»[24] Pérignon negotiated a treaty in June, 1796, which made the cession of Louisiana contingent upon the acquisition of Gibraltar by Spain, but the Directory refused to accept this arrangement on the ground that France was not getting enough in return for setting up a kingdom for the Duke of Parma and for guaranteeing the numerous possessions of Spain; it insisted that West Florida should be added to Louisiana and that Spain force Portugal into a peace.[25] Godoy had asked through the Spanish ambassador in London that England guarantee Spanish possessions in return for Spanish neutrality, but England avoided an answer; consequently Godoy accepted the terms of July 27. After the Directory refused this arrangement, Godoy, bolstered up by an offer from England to guarantee Spanish possessions on the basis of 1790 and to pay the expenses of the war, if Spain would re-enter the coalition, declined to meet the increased demands of the Directory and informed Pérignon that England had offered to give Spain, Gibraltar and San Domingo, if she would re-enter the coalition.[26] Consequently the Directory dropped the matter of Louisiana and signed a treaty of alliance with Spain on August 19, 1796.

Malmesbury, an English envoy, was in Paris from October to December, 1796, presumably on a peace mission but the sincerity of the enterprise has been questioned.[27] He was not in a position to come to terms with France because England was not ready to recognize France in the Austrian Netherlands.[28] His instructions provided that, if France retained San Domingo, England would have to have compensation in the New World.[29] He took up the negotiation at Lisle the following July with Maret, Letourneur, and Pleville. He was prepared to guarantee the colonial domain of France and the acquisitions in Belgium in return for the Cape, Ceylon, and

Trinidad with the privilege of substituting Puerto Rico or New Orleans for the latter.[30] To effect a peace on this basis it was necessary for France to secure the consent of the Batavian Republics and Spain to the cession of this territory as compensation. England was in earnest for a peace settlement since Austria had capitulated in the Peace of Campo Formio and the mutinies in the British navy were becoming serious.

On June 29, when Letourneur and his companions reached Lisle, the Directory, drafted new instructions for Pérignon at Madrid. In exchange for territory on the Gulf of Mexico he was to propose the acquisition of Romagne for the Duke of Parma. Godoy refused to negotiate on these terms but offered to cede both Louisiana and Florida in return for Gibraltar.[31] At the same time a negotiation was begun with Portugal that Brazil might be ceded to France as a means of offsetting English claims to Dutch colonies.[32]

Peace between France and England turned on compensation for England from Spanish territory and Spain refused to cede any of her territory in the New World without receiving Gibraltar as compensation. The French commissioners talked matters over with Malmesbury at Lisle[33] and the latter, judging that Grenville, the minister of foreign affairs, was too proud to consider a relinquishment of Gibraltar, suggested to Pitt[34] the possibility of exchanging it for Spanish territory in the New World. On July 16, 1797, a ministerial crisis occured in Paris which replaced Charles Delacroix with Talleyrand. The negotiation at Lisle was continued by Maret in secret until September 4, when the war party came into power in Paris. The French propositions communicated to the English ministry on July 16 by Malmesbury were rejected[35] and the mission to Lisle ended in failure.

With the coming into power of Talleyrand in July, 1797, a man with a vision of empire was introduced into the government. After his return from America he read a paper, April 4, 1797, before the National Institute, in which he pointed out the advantages to be gained by the extention of colonial power in America. He emphasized particularly the advantages in trade as a means of supplying the French West Indies and that the colony could be an outlet for revolutionary spirit.[36] Up to January, 1799, Talleyrand attempted to secure Louisiana by acquiring the territory of Guinea up to the Amazon from Portugal and trading it to Spain. Portugal was willing to cede Guinea to France but insisted that it should never be given to Spain.[37] In urging the cession of Louisiana in exchange for Portuguese territory with the Spanish Ambassador, Azara, at Paris, Talleyrand dwelt upon the necessity for the Spanish to create a barrier between Mexico and the United States.[38] This argument was well worn out, having served to conceal numerous real ends since 1795. However, it was beginning to have real weight as the interests of the Americans increased in the Mississippi Valley. Saavedra, the Spanish minister of foreign affairs, advised that the old treaty be continued and the cession of Louisiana not mixed up with the peace with Portugal.[39]

Upon Bonaparte's advent into power in November, 1799, Talleyrand was able to secure the collaboration of a man of his own views. As the French empire in Egypt faded away in the smoke of the battle of Aboukir Bay, the two began to dream of an American empire built upon San Domingo as a base. Thus to retrieve the prestige of Bonaparte, dimmed by the Egyptian adventure, they began to disturb Spain's peace of mind with

regard to American encroachment and to point to the great desirability of a French buffer state for the protection of Mexico. To hurry the negotiation with Spain the special mission of Berthier to Madrid was announced in July. Berthier arrived in Madrid in September and delivered an ultimatum for Louisiana together with two Floridas and six vessels of war.[40] In return France offered to set up a state for the Duke of Parma. The King held out for the two Floridas but yielded on the question of Louisiana and the ships of war and entered into an offensive and defensive alliance against England. The treaty was signed at San Ildefonso, October 1, 1800.

The retrocession of Louisiana had been rumored in the United States as early as 1786 when John Jay, the secretary of foreign affairs, questioned the French chargé, Otto, as to the possibility of retrocession. Vergennes replied through Otto that there had never been any question of exchanging French holdings in the West Indies for Louisiana.[41] The evidence reviewed speaks for the sincerity of Vergennes' assurance to Jay. John Quincy Adams reported a rumor of retrocession from the Hague on October 16, 1796,[42] and on November 9, 1797, King, the American minister to London, reported that Godoy stated he could not hold out much longer on Louisiana.[43] In September, 1800, when Berthier arrived in Madrid a publicist in Paris announced the purpose of his mission and Humphreys, the American minister to Spain, questioned Urquijo who managed to deny the account. A copy of the treaty, which was to be kept secret, was sent to America by the London minister on November 20, 1802.

In summary then, it may be said that in the period 1763 to 1790 the old regime in France did not entertain designs of empire in the Mississippi Valley. In the period from 1790 to 1795 France might have been in a position to establish a colonial empire there, if Talleyrand's mission to London or Genêt's mission to America had succeeded, although the acquisition of territory would have been incidental to the main purpose at hand. The period from 1795 to 1799 stands out in contrast.[44] Although the negotiations for Louisiana were almost continuous during that time, the purpose distinctly changed from that of the Directory to acquire territory to trade with England, to that after 1797 of Talleyrand and Bonaparte who hoped to build a French empire in America.

NOTES

1. Henry Adams, *History of the United States of America* (New York, 1891-98), I, 253-54; F.P. Renaut, *La Question de la Louisiane, 1796-1806* (Paris, 1918), 7; Albert Sorel, «La diplomatie Française et l'Espagne,» *Revue Historique* (Paris, 1872), 211,308; Frederick J. Turner, «Policy of France toward the Mississippi Valley,» *American Historical Review,* (New York, 1905), X, 249-79.

2. Paul C. Phillips, *The West in the Diplomacy of the Revolution* (Urbana, Illinois, 1911), 20-32.

3. Manuel Godoy, *Memorias de Don Manuel Godoy* (Paris, 1839-41), III, 17-18.

4. Phillips, *op. cit.,* 30-32; Edward S. Corwin, *French Policy and the American Alliance of 1778* (Princeton, 1916), 11-13. Godoy was twenty years of age when Vengeance died in 1787 and was not prime minister until 1792.

5. Correspondence copied from the French Archives for Samuel F. Bemis under the direction of Waldo G. Leland. From the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review.* 17 (1930).

6. Correspondence for the period 1778-87, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (transcripts in the Library of Congress, hereafter cited as A.M.A.E.); for the period 1787-89, *Am. Hist. Rev.,* (1903), VIII, 709-33; and George Bancroft, *The History of the Formation of the Constitution* (New York, 1883), II, Append.

7. Albert Mousset, *Un Témoin Ignoré de la Révolution: le comte de Fernan Nunez, Ambassadeur d'Espagne à Paris, 1787-1791* (Paris, 1924). Dr. Bemis has a letter from Mousset to the effect that in editing the correspondence of Fernan Nunez he found no proposals on the part of France to buy Louisiana.

8. Phillips, *op. cit.,* 14-17.

9. Francis Wharton, ed., *The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence . . .,* (Washington, 1889), III, 488ff.

10. Report of conference with French minister, Luzerne, May 28, 1781, *ibid.,* IV, 453; instructions to Peace Commissioners, June 7, 1781, *ibid.,* IV, 477.

11. Rayneval's memoir respecting the right of the United States to the navigation of the Mississippi, *ibid.,* VI, 25-27.

12. Otto to Vergennes, October 2, 1785, A.M.E., Etats-Unis, III, fols., 336-37; instructions to Moustier, October 1, 1787, *Am. Hist. Rev.,* (1903), VIII, 713.

13. William R. Shepherd, «The Cession of Louisiana to Spain,» *Political Science Quarterly* (Boston, 1904), XIX, 439-58; *An Account of Louisiana Laid before Congress by Direction of the President . . . November 14, 1803* (Providence, 1804), 63-65; Charles Gayarre, *History of Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1885), I, 51, 356-357.

14. Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française* (Paris, 1885-1904), II, 94.

15. *Ibid.,* II, 422.

16. American Historical Association, *Annual Report,* 1896, I, 957-67; 1903, II, 201-11. On November 5, 1792, the minister of foreign

affairs, doubtless in anticipation of Genêt's mission, directed a letter to the head of the Bureau of Colonies asking for any memoirs or documents that that division might have on Louisiana. A.M.A.E., C.P., Espagne, VICXXXIV, no. 65. The chief reported on November 15, that he had nothing dealing with Louisiana, *ibid.*, no. 84.

17. Raymond Guyot, *Le Directoire et la Paix de l'Europe, des Traités de Bâle à deuxième Coalition, 1795-1799* (Paris, 1912), 232ff, 340, 429ff. Renaut, publishing his work six years later, follows the same line of reasoning but cites no authority for his statements, *op. cit.*, 23ff.

18. Sorel, *op. cit.*, IV, 353, 368.

19. Fauchet to Commissioners of Foreign Relations, February 4, 1795, Am. Hist. Assoc., *Annual Report*, 1903, II, 567. This letter was received by the committee of foreign affairs and referred to the Committee of Public Safety, April 3, 1795, *ibid.*, 620.

20. William Wickham (ed.), *The correspondence of the Right Honorable William Wickham from the year 1794* (London, 1870), I, 6.

21. Guyot and Renaut take up only the work of the Directory. Sorel gives no reason for the demand of the committee for Louisiana.

22. Sorel, *op. cit.*, IV, 369.

23. Guyot, *op. cit.*, 28.

24. *Ibid.*, 237.

25. *Ibid.*, 240.

26. *Ibid.*, 241.

27. Ephraim D. Adams, *Influence of Grenville on Pitt's Foreign Policy* (Washington, 1904), 48-50.

28. Malmesbury to Lord Grenville, November 28, 1796, J.H. Malmesbury, *Diaries and Correspondence* (London, 1844), III, 335.

29. Mémoire confidentiel, Grenville à Delacroix par Malmesbury, December 11, 1796, *ibid.*, III, 343-44.

30. Report of conference with Letourneur, Pleville-le-Pelly, and Maret by Malmesbury, July 8, 1796, *ibid.*, III, 385; Grenville to Sir Morton Eden, *Am. Hist. Rev.*, X, 830.

31. Guyot, *op. cit.*, 429-30.

32. *Ibid.*, 430.

33. Malmesbury to Grenville, July 16, 1797, Malmesbury, *op. cit.*, III, 404.

34. Grenville to Malmesbury, July 21, 1797, *ibid.*, III, 409. Pitt's answer to Malmesbury's letter of July 16 is not published and was not found by E.D. Adams or Guyot. Malmesbury evidently answered Pitt's reply on July 25, when he said, «I am very much obliged to you for what you said on Gibraltar. I have all the old prejudices on this point and am glad to see that you share them.» *Ibid.*, III, 429.

35. Malmesbury to Pitt, July 16, 1797, *ibid.*, III, 400.

36. This argument was an old one that had been used since the time of Moustier in 1787. *Report on Canadian Archives, 1890*, 108-19; Am. Hist. Assoc. *Annual Report*, 1896, I, 946.

37. Malmesbury, op. cit., III, 725-31.;

38. French Minister of Foreign Relations to Azara, July, 1798, enclosed in letter of July 13, Azara to Saavedra, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Sección de Estado, leg. 4022 (transcripts in the Library of Congress, hereafter cited as A.H.N., Est.); Saavedra to Azara, July 25, 1798, *ibid.*, leg. 4022; Azara to Saavedra, no. 48, Paris, August 11, 1798, *ibid.*, leg. 4022; Azara to Saavedra, no. 51, Paris, August 11, 1798, *ibid.*, leg. 4022; Saavedra to Azara, San Ildefonso, August 27, 1798, *ibid.*, leg. 4022.

39. Saavedra to Azara, Aranjuez, confidential, June 4, 1798, *ibid.*, leg. 4022.

40. Renaut, *op. cit.*, 67.

41. Otto to Vergennes, New York, April 23, 1786, A.M.A.E., Etats-Unis, XXXI, fols. 259-60; Vergennes to Otto, Paris, August 25, 1786, *ibid.*, XXXII, fols. 62-63, no. 3.

42. John Q. Adams, *Writings* (New York, 1913-17), II, 37.

43. King's information came through the British Ministry, Rufus King, *Life and Correspondence* (New York, 1894-1900), II, 237-38.

44. This period is described in James A. James, «French Opinion as a Factor in Preventing War between France and the United States, 1795-1800,» *Am. Hist. Rev.*, XXX, (1925), 44-55, and «Louisiana as a Factor in American Diplomacy, 1795-1800.» *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, I, (1913), 44-56.

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THE WORLD ASPECTS OF THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

By William M. Sloane

Argument by title is a very attractive form of fallacy. We therefore freely confess that it is rather a thesis we have to establish than a theme to unfold when we speak of the Louisiana purchase as a decisive epoch of general history and of American history in particular. Moreover, there is a sense in which every moment throughout the comparatively short duration of recorded history is a decisive one: in the pursuit of that idea the verge between sound, solemn truth and fanciful fiction is but a razor-edge.

Yet by common consent some men and some events are epochal. Carefully scrutinized, such men and such events are known by very definite qualities. There are times when the great central current has few lagoons, no backwater, and never an eddy. The whole substance of history is thrown into a single channel, affording a notable example of the unity of history and compelling its study by transverse sections rather than by longitudinal fibers. The man of such a period is fairly certain to be preëminently busy, so diligent, so comprehensive, so perspicacious as to be for the duration of his activity and ability an indispensable person, the man of his age. He is literally and etymologically a governor, for he steers the bark of state alike on the convexity of the swift and swollen tide, and in the hollowing current of a falling flood.

Such a decisive epoch was that of the eighteenth-century revolutions, a crisis reached after long, slow preparation, precipitated by social and religious bigotry, dizzy in its consummation, wild and headlong in its flight, precipitous in its crash. Of this important time the results have been so permanent that they are the commonplaces of contemporary history; in what Carlyle called the revolutionary loom the warp and woof were spun from the past, and the fabric is that from which our working clothes are cut. Moreover, within those years appeared the great dominating soul of modern humanity, who displayed first and last every weakness and every sordid meanness of mankind, but in such giant dimensions that even his depravity inspires awe. His virtues were equally portentous because they worked on the grand scale, with materials that had been threshed and winnowed in the theory and experience of five generations of mankind. It was well within this stupendous age and by the act of this representative man that Louisiana was redeemed from Spanish misrule and incorporated with the territories of the United States. Nor was this all. A careful examination of the general political situation just a hundred years ago will exhibit the elemental and almost ultimate fact that the sale of Louisiana was coincident with the turn of the age. It is to this exhibit and to some reflections on its meaning that we ad-

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dress ourselves.

The substance of the treaty of Amiens was that Great Britain ostensibly abandoned all concern with the continent of Europe, and that France, ostensibly too, should strictly mind her own affairs in her colonies and the remoter quarters of the globe. George III, removed from his escutcheon the fleur-de-lis, and from his ceremonial title the style of king of France. The whole negotiation was on both sides purely diplomatic, an exchange of public and hollow courtesies, to gain time for the realities of a struggle for supremacy between the world powers of the period, a struggle begun with modern history, renewed in 1688, and destined to last until the exhaustion of one of the contestants in 1815. Neither party to the treaty had the slightest intention of observing either its spirit or its letter. While the paper was in process of negotiation Bonaparte was consolidating French empire on the continent, and after its signature he did not pause for a single instant to show even a formal respect for his obligations. The reorganization of Holland in preparation for its incorporation into the French system, the annexation of Piedmont and defiance to Russia in the matter of her Italian protégés, the Act of Moderation in Switzerland, and finally the contemptuous rearrangement of Germany were successive steps which reduced England to despair for her continental trade. To her it seemed as if there could be no question about two things: first, that the old order must be restored, in order to safeguard her commercial safety; and second, that her colonial policy must be more aggressive than ever.

A favorite charge of Napoleon's detractors is that he left France without a colonial empire. This was due to no absence of either aspirations or efforts. His earliest passion, his mature intention, his latest yearnings were for a French colonial empire. This was true, because there was not one item of the great political creed formulated by Richelieu to which he did not consider himself the heir; oriental aspirations, western ventures and explorations, the dominance of France in the tropic seas, around the globe, were articles of that creed. It had been therefore no slight blow to his personal ambition when he failed in Egypt. Turkey was still safe under the protection of Great Britain, and the highway to India was still in British hands. Almost without a moment's hesitancy, he turned his forces westward and formed the majestic design of a second New France around the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico, and eventually with a mighty wing toward South America. This adjunct became the chief corner-stone of the policy when, after its initial failure, he had a chance to renew it in 1808 by Sassenay's mission to Argentina.

Simultaneously he had come to terms with Paul of Russia, and with him he negotiated a grandiose treaty providing for a great land expedition against Hindustan. Each power was to furnish 35,000 men and a corps of scholars; the march was to be a colonization of the wilderness, and the wealth of the East Indies was to be the reward. Paul died by violence just as his army was crossing the Volga on the ice in March, 1801, and Alexander, his more or less blood-guilty but philosophic heir, put a stop to further procedure. A curious chapter of England's resistance to the French Revolution is that for which Lord Wellesley furnished the subject matter in his campaign against Tippoo Sahib, then in alliance with a mighty band of French adventurers, who, though royalists, were willing to stand and fight for French supremacy in India. To this long and gallant struggle the treaty of Amiens was an extinguisher, for it restored the five French cities to Bonaparte. Decaen, the noted and boasting Anglophobe, had demanded a mission to India on the very morrow of Hohenlinden; less

than a month after the signatures were affixed at Amiens he was despatched to occupy the French towns of Pondicherry, now to be restored. But with an expedition of 1,600 men he had the monstrous disproportion of seven generals and a corresponding mass of minor officers. Clearly he was to reorganize the whole French force of India. Wellesley refused to execute the treaty, and Decaen was forced back on the French settlements of Réunion as a base from which to await developments. Hindu troops were drilled, reorganized, and found thoroughly trustworthy; a detachment of them had even been sent to Egypt, where they had some slight share in the retention of British control. It was Bonaparte's rôle to present a dauntless front to his foes, whatever his inner discouragement and hesitancy. Accordingly he despatched the notorious Sebastiani as a so-called commercial agent to examine the situation in the Levant. The result was a report giving an exact account of all the English and Turkish forces beyond the Adriatic, and drawing the highly pertinent conclusion that 6,000 French soldiers could reconquer Egypt. When this stinging insult was published by the First Consul in the *Moniteur*, the British world was worried into open defiance.

From this rapid survey there emerge the important facts essential to our discussion. It was surely a turning-point in the history of the civilized world, so far as Asia was concerned, when Bonaparte's oriental designs were permanently thwarted, when Russia was forced into an eastward expansion north of the great central mountain ridge of Asia to become a hyperborean power, when England defiantly claimed for the first time all Hindustan as her own. It wrote «finis» to the chapter of France's glory in India and indeed to the story of her Asiatic aspirations: her far eastern colonies seized under the present republic are comparatively insignificant factories, which she holds on the sufferance of the European concert, and for which she would not defy the world a single moment, as she would defy it to the spilling of her heart's blood should her present African empire be menaced.

Again, the situation was a turning-point of the first importance in Africa. In consequence of the desire of both contracting parties to catch their breath, Egypt was restored to Turkey, and the Cape Colony was to be a free port, a no-man's-land; Malta, which is an African isle, was to be returned to the Knights of St. John. The theory was that not one Christian power, continental or insular, was to hold a coign of vantage as regards the dark continent. Russia, to be sure, was jealous for Malta; England and France, for Egypt and the Cape; they might remain so, but that was all. Of course we are familiar with the late partitions of Africa among the powers, the coast and *hinterland* arrangements which bid fair to become permanent occupations. Had it not been for the compulsory suspension of Bonaparte's oriental plans, the retention by England both of India and of the Indian highway through the Mediterranean, and the confirmation of this situation by the evolution of affairs across the Atlantic which culminated in the sale of Louisiana to us, the fate of Africa, humanly speaking, would, like that of Asia, have been far different in every single respect.

What was written for Europe in the book of fate was soon revealed. No one could prate more serenely about destiny than General Bonaparte, nor scrutinize more quizzically the sibylline leaves. But like the augurs of old, he could scarcely retain his mirth when he announced the oracle, nor keep his body from shaking with laughter while the feigned fury of passion was distorting the features of his face in frenzied anger. The treaty of Amiens was negotiated subject to guaranties from the other powers, and Addington well knew that Russia was going to fish in the troubled waters

of neutrality for the leviathan of her disappearing prosperity. So the English refused to evacuate Malta. The Whitworth scene is one of Napoleon Bonaparte's finest dramatic rôles, and the delivery of his line, «I would rather see England in the Faubourg St. Antoine than in Malta», a climax of theatrical statesmanship. It is by no means sure that he might not have seen the British sail away both from Alexandria and Valetta, that he might not have received in delivery the cities of Pondicherry, that he might not have confirmed his American empire, had he been willing to grant Great Britain a commercial treaty that would have turned her stores of manufactured goods into hard cash, have relieved the awful financial strain under which she was tortured, and have given her the full advantage of her long precedence in the industrial revolution. But no. By the treaty of Morfontaine, September 30, 1800, with the United States, he arranged to strip us of all Mississippi trade and thus tardily execute the policy of our isolation on this continent, which Vergennes had vainly sought to embody in the public law of Europe. Soon he began to close the ports of France and her allies more firmly than ever to British goods, hoping under the protective system to give France a chance in the race for industrial supremacy. The English were aghast, and in their grim determination to renew what they felt was a struggle for life and death they broke off diplomatic relations, and war began. This outcome was inevitable, but it was too soon for Bonaparte. His versatility was sorely strained to settle finally on his policy.

It was Samuel Adams who first sneered at his fatherland as a people of shopkeepers. The winged word soon became a commonplace to all outsiders, but as it flew every nation that used the gibe girded itself to enter the struggle for the same goal. France above all was determined to be a nation of shopkeepers, and the First Consul of what was still a shaky experiment in government knew well that rather than abandon that ambition, he must sacrifice every other. After all, a colonial empire has value only as the home nation has accessible ports, manufactories for colonial products, and wares to exchange with the producers. France had neither factories nor manufacturers, and was destitute of nearly the whole machinery of exchange. Her merchant vessels sailed only by grace of the British fleet. Her home market was dependent on British traders even in times of war. Bonaparte's foremost thought, therefore, was for concentration of energy. The sea-power of the world was Britain's, and her tyranny of the seas without a real check; even the United States could only spit out defiant and revengeful threats when her merchantmen were treated with contempt on the high seas by British men-of-war. Therefore with swift and comprehensive grasp he framed and announced a new policy. The French envoy in London was informed that France was now forced to the conquest of Europe – this of course for the stimulating of French industries – and to the restoration of her occidental empire. This was most adroit. The embers of French patriotism could be fanned into a white heat by these well-worn but never exhausted expedients – a blast against perfidious Albion and a sentimental passion for the New France beyond the Atlantic. The motions were a feint against England by the formation of a second camp at Boulogne, where a force really destined for Austria was assembled, and the wresting of Louisiana from the weak Spanish hands which held it. As an incident of the agitation it seemed best that the French democracy should have an imperial rather than a republican title, and the style of emperor and empire was exhumed from the garbage heap of the Terror for use in the pageantry of a court.

In Europe thus, as in the neighboring continents, the rearrangement of politics, ter-

ritorial boundaries, social, economic, and diplomatic relations, a change which has made possible the modern system, was really dependent on the events which led to the adoption of the policy just described. But this policy involved a reversal of every sound historical principle in Bonaparte's plans. For twelve years longer he was to commit blunder upon blunder; to trample on national pride; to elevate a false system of political economy into a fetish; to conduct, as in the Moscow campaign, great migrations to the eastward in defiance of nature's laws; to launch his plain, not to say vulgar and weak, family on an enterprise of monarchical alliances for which they had no capacity; to undo, in short, as far as in him lay, every beneficent and well-conceived piece of statesmanship with which he had so far been concerned. It has been well said that had he died in midsummer, 1802, his glory would have been immaculate and there would have been no spots on his sun. The Napoleonic work in Europe was destined to have its far-reaching and permanent results, but the man was ere long almost entirely eliminated from control over them. The very last of his great constructions was the sale of Louisiana. He needed the purchase-money, he selected his purchaser and forced it on him, with a view to upbuilding a giant rival to the gigantic power of Great Britain.

When we turn therefore to America, we shall at once observe on how slender a thread a great event may depend, how great a fire may be kindled by a spark adroitly placed. While yet other matters were hanging in the balance, he selected his own brother-in-law, General Leclerc, such was his deep concern, to conduct an expedition to the West Indies. There were embarked 35,000 men, and these the very flower of the republican armies, superb fighters, but a possible thorn in the side of a budding emperor at home. Their goal was San Domingo, where a wonderful negro, Toussaint L'Ouverture, noting the attractive example of the benevolent despots in Europe, had, under republican forms, not only abolished slavery, but had made himself a beneficent dictator. The fine but delicate structure of his negro state was easily crushed to the earth, but the fighting was fierce and prolonged, the climate and the pest were enabled to inaugurate and complete a work of slaughter more baleful than that of war, and two-thirds of the French invaders, including the commander and fifteen of his generals, fell victims to the yellow fever. The French were utterly routed, the sorry remnant sailed away, and the blacks fell into the hands of the worthless tyrant Dessalines, whose misrule killed the germs of order planted by Toussaint. One of our historians thinks this check of France by black soldiers to have been a determinative factor in American history, for thereafter there could be no question of a Gulf and Caribbean empire for France. Louisiana, he indicates, became at once a superfluous dependency, costly and annoying. This is a far-fetched contention: great as have been the services of the negro to the United States since he first fought on the battle-field of Monmouth under Washington, the failure of France in San Domingo was not through the sword of the blacks, but was an act of God through pestilence.

The circumstances that forced Louisiana upon the United States, then a petty power with revenues and expenditures far smaller than those of the Philippine Islands at this moment, arose from Napoleon's European necessities. The cession from Spain included all that Spain had received from France, the whole Gulf coast from St. Mary's to the Rio Grande, and the French pretensions not only northwestward to the Rockies but to the Pacific. The return made to Spain was the insignificant kingdom of Etruria and a solemn pledge that, should the First Consul fail in his

promise, Louisiana in its fullest extent was to be restored to Spain. France therefore might not otherwise alienate it to any power whatever. The exacting and suspicious spirit, shown both by Charles IV, and his contemptible minister Godoy, Prince of the Peace, had exasperated Bonaparte beyond endurance. The Spanish Bourbons were doomed by him to the fate of their kinsfolk in France; a pledge to a vanishing phantom of royalty was of small account. It was during the delay created by the punctilio of Godoy that the failure of the San Domingo expedition extinguished all hope of making Louisiana the sole entrepôt and staple of supplies for the West Indies. And simultaneously it grew evident that the truce negotiated at Amiens as a treaty could not last much longer, that either France must endure the humiliation of seeing her profits therefrom utterly withheld, or herself declare war, or goad Great Britain into a renewal of hostilities. This last, as is well known, was the alternative chosen by Napoleon.

Our government had been in despair. The establishment of French empire in the West Indies would have destroyed our lucrative trade with the islands. It was trying enough that a feeble power like Spain should command the outlet of the Mississippi basin, but intolerable that such a mastery of the continent should fall into the hands of a strong and magisterial power like France. We were in dismay, even after the departure of the French from San Domingo. Bonaparte, however, was scarcely less disturbed; for Jefferson, despite his avowed Gallicism, spiritedly declared both to the First Consul and to Livingston, our minister to Paris, that the occupation of Louisiana by the great French force organized to that end could only result in an alliance of the two English-speaking nations which would utterly banish the French flag from the high seas. Bonaparte preserved an outward calm for those about him and went his way apparently unperturbed. But inwardly his mind seethed and without long delay he took his choice between the courses open to him. It was the first exhibition to himself and his family of the imperial despot soon to be known as Napoleon I., Emperor of the French. If Britain was the tyrant of the seas, he would be despot of the land. To French empire he would reduce Germany, Italy, and Spain in subjection, and with all the maritime resources of the continent at his back he would first shut every important port to English commerce, and then with allied and dependent fleets at his disposal try conclusions with the British behemoth for liberty of the seas and a new colonial empire. By the second camp at Boulogne and the occupation of Hanover Napoleon threw England into panic, while simultaneously he began the creation of his grand imperial army and thereby menaced Austria, the greatest German power, in her coalition with Russia, Sweden, Naples, and Great Britain. The latter, he was well aware, could face a hostile demonstration on her front with courage, if not with equanimity; and he determined to add a double stroke – to gain a harvest of gold and on her rear to strengthen her exasperated transatlantic searival by selling Louisiana to the United States.

That determination was the turning-point in his career, just as the sudden wheel and about-face of the splendid force at Boulogne, when he hurled it across Europe at Vienna, displayed at last the turning-point in his policy. His brother Lucien had been an influential negotiator with Spain and plumed himself on the acquisition of the great domain which had been for long the brightest jewel in the crown of France. His brother Joseph had negotiated the treaty of Amiens as a step preparatory to regaining a magnificent colonial empire for his country, an empire of which an old and splendid French possession was to be the corner-stone. Both were stunned and then

infuriated when they learned their brother's resolution, sensations which were intensified to fury when they heard him announce that he would work his will in spite of all constitutional checks and balances. There is no historic scene more grotesque than that depicted by Lucien in his memoirs when he and Joseph undertook to oppose Napoleon. The latter was luxuriating in his morning bath on April 7, 1803, in the Tuileries when the brothers were admitted. After a long and intimate talk on general politics the fateful subject was finally broached by Napoleon, as he turned from side to side and wallowed in the perfumed water. Neither of the brothers could control his feelings, and the controversy grew hot and furious from minute to minute until Joseph, leaning over the tub, roared threats of opposition and words of denunciation. Brother Napoleon, lifting himself half-way to the top, suddenly fell back and clenched his arguments by splashing a full flood in the face and over the body of Joseph, drenching him to the skin. A valet was summoned, entered, and, paralyzed by the fury of the scene, fell in a dead faint. New aid was called and, the fires of passion being slaked for the time, the conflict ended until Napoleon and Joseph were decently clothed, when it was renewed in the office of the secretary Bourrienne. Ere long hot words were again spoken, violent language was succeeded by violent gestures, until at last Napoleon in a theatrical rage dashed his snuff-box on the floor, and the contestants separated. Disjointed and fierce as was the stormy argument, it revealed the whole of the imperial policy as we have stated it.

Meanwhile events in America, if not so picturesque and majestic, were equally tempestuous. The peace policy of Jefferson was rapidly going to pieces in the face of a westward menace, the Federalists were jubilant, and in the Senate James Ross, of Pennsylvania, called for war. When the intendant of Spain at New Orleans denied Americans the storage rights they had enjoyed in that city since 1795, the French politics of the President fell into general disrepute and contempt, for men reasoned *a fortiori*, if such things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? It mattered not that Spain's highest official, the governor, disavowed the act, the fire was in the stubble. Washington disavowed the act again and rebuked the subordinate. Congress was soothed, but not so the people of the west and south. They were fully aware, as have been all our frontiersmen and pioneers from the beginning, that the Mississippi and all the lands it waters are the organic structure of unity and successful settlement on this continent. The Pacific and Atlantic coast strips, even the great but bleak valley of the St. Lawrence, are incidents of territorial unity and political control compared with the great alluvion of the Mississippi. This was unknown, utterly unknown, and worse yet, entirely indifferent to our statesmen. Madison certainly, and possibly Jefferson, believed that western immigration would pause and end on the east bank of the Father of Waters.

Yet party government was a necessity under our system, and Jefferson's ladder, the Republican party, would be knocked into its component parts should the West and South, noisy, exacting, and turbulent, desert and go over to the expiring faction of the Federalists; nay worse, it might be forced into almost complete negation of its own existence by a forced adoption of the Federalist policy, alliance with Great Britain – monarchic and aristocratic – rather than with radical and democratic France. What could a distracted partizan do? Jefferson was adroit and inventive. He sent James Monroe to negotiate with Bonaparte for the purchase of New Orleans and both Floridas at the price of two millions, or upward to ten, for all or part, whatever he

could get; he was not even to disdain the deposit or storage right, if nothing else could be had, and if he could get nothing, he was to await instructions. With such credentials he sailed on March 8, 1803. A peace-lover must sometimes speak low and small, even as cowards sometimes do. Three weeks later appeared in New Orleans Laussat, the advance agent of French occupation; Victor and his troops were to follow. It is not possible to conceive that a foreign policy should be more perplexing, confused, or uncertain than that of the philosophic theorist who is the hero of the strict-constructionist party in these United States.

Robert R. Livingston, the regular American envoy at Paris, had, under his instructions from home, worked with skill and zeal on the spoliation claims and incidentally on the question of the Mississippi and the Floridas. While the colonization schemes of Bonaparte seemed feasible, Livingston made no headway whatever, except to extort an admission that the spoliation claims were just. Neither Talleyrand nor Livingston was much concerned about the great northwest. The American was clear that the importance of any control lay in the possession of New Orleans, and on April 11, 1803, he said so to the French minister, vigorously and squarely declaring further that a persistent refusal of our request would unite us with Great Britain to the serious discomfiture of France in her colonial aspirations. This was said with some asperity, for Livingston had been aware that the First Consul wanted all negotiation transferred to Washington under the guidance of a special envoy sent for the purpose, the wilful Bernadotte, and now worse yet, he himself was to be superseded by Monroe. He had been a diligent and even importunate negotiator; it was a ray of comfort in later days to recall that the first suggestion for the sale of all Louisiana was made to him in that momentous interview.

What had occurred Livingston could not know. It was this. On the morning of that very day there reached the Tuileries despatches giving in full detail an account of the tremendous preparations making in England for the renewal of war both by land and sea. Bonaparte's impatience knew no bounds. Hitherto he had concealed his true policy of sale behind a scheme to spend the purchase-money on internal improvements in France, and he had on his work-table map-outlines for five great canals. Now, at daybreak, he summoned Barbé-Marbois, sometime French consul-general in the United States, an official of state with a thorough knowledge of our affairs, and ordered that a negotiation for the sale, not of the Floridas and New Orleans, but of all Louisiana, should immediately be opened with Livingston. He fixed the price at fifty million francs. The envoy could of course do nothing, but he thought thirty millions enough. Next day Monroe arrived at Havre, and reaching Paris April 13, that very same day Barbé-Marbois and our two great statesmen began to treat. Upon Monroe and Livingston devolved a momentous responsibility. Monroe was by a most indefinite implication left a certain liberty, for under no circumstances whatsoever was he to end a negotiation if once it was begun. And here, instead of minimizing terms, was, so to speak, a great universe of land tender. But we had not so easily thrown off the bright and glistening garment of righteousness as had Napoleon Bonaparte, and in the minds of both Americans was the question, nonexistent for the First Consul, as he himself squarely said, of whether the inhabitants of the district, men and women, human souls, could be dealt in as chattels are.

Livingston had already seen darkly as in a glass what the west might make of the United States. Bonaparte's contributions to the

discussion were terse and trenchant. If he did not transfer the title right speedily, a British fleet would take possession almost in a twinkling: the transfer, he said, might in three centuries make America the rival of Europe; why not, it was a long way ahead; but, on the other hand, there never had been an enduring federation, and this one in America was unlikely to begin the series; finally, he wanted the cash as the United States wanted the land. Let there be no delay. And there was none. The terms of the sale and the facts of the transfer do not concern us here. In Bonaparte we had no friend; but what the ancient régime began in establishing an American independence, the First Consul completed; for, thanks to him, we fought the War of 1812 for commercial liberty, while the exploitation of Louisiana has made us what we are to-day. The instant we accepted that great territory, with all its responsibilities and possibilities, we became a world power. We were puny enough as a world power at first, but we have grown. Jefferson and his agents were primarily statesmen for the purpose of existing conditions, and in Monroe's mission desired a remedy solely and entirely for party evils. They had, however, the courage to accept the fortune forced upon them, even though in their case, as in that of Bonaparte, it entailed, we repeat, a complete reversal of all the political and party principles of the platform on which they had hitherto stood.

The change wrought by the Louisiana purchase in American life and culture was simply revolutionary. Hitherto in our weakness we had faced backward, varying between two ideas of European alliance. We virtually had British and French parties. Jefferson, who represented the latter, thought of no other alternative in his trouble than to strike hands with England. With Louisiana on our hands we turned our faces to our own front door. The Louisiana we bought had no Pacific outlet in reality, but the Lewis and Clark expedition gave it one, and that we have broadened by war and purchase until we control the western shore of the continent. Under such engrossing cares we ceased to think of either French or British ties, except as exasperating, and became not merely Americans, but, realizing Washington's aspirations, turned into real continentals, with a scorn of all entanglements whatever. In the occupation and settlement of Louisiana the slavery question became acute, and it was the struggle for the expansion of that system over Louisiana soil which precipitated the Civil War.

But if the change in national outlook was radical, that in constitutional attitude was even more so. The constitutions of our original states were the expression of political habits in a community, the Federal Constitution was in the main a transcript of those elements which were common in some degree to all the British colonies. It was an age of written constitutions, because the flux of institutions was so rapid that men needed a mooring for the substantial gains they had made. The past was so recent that statesmen were timid, and they wanted their metes and bounds to be fixed by a monument. Nothing was more natural than to pause and fall back on the record thus made permanent, and strict construction was and long continued to be a political fetish. The Louisiana purchase was a circumstance of the first importance in party struggle. Yet neither Federalist nor Republican dared, after mature deliberation, to urge the question of constitutional amendment as essential to meet the crisis thus precipitated. The enormous price entailed what was felt to be an intolerable burden of taxation, and in the uproar of spoken and printed debate played no small part. But the vital question was whether the adjustment of new relations was constitutional.

Never did the kaleidoscope of politics display a more surprising reversal of effect. The loose-construction party lost its wits entirely, while the strict constructionists suddenly became the apostles not of verbal but of logical construction. Jefferson violated his principles in signing the treaty, but he was easily persuaded that amendment was not necessary, that on the contrary the treaty-making power covered the case completely. This was not conquest, which would have been covered by the war power, but purchase, which is covered by the treaty power surrendered, like the other, by the states to the federal government. The Federalists were represented in the House by Gaylord Griswold; in the Senate by Ross and Pickering. Their resistance was identical in both, factious to the highest degree. They contended that the executive had usurped the powers of Congress by regulating commerce with foreign powers and by incorporating foreign soil and foreign people with the United States, this last being a power which it was doubtful whether Congress possessed. Supposing, however, that New Orleans became American, how could a treaty be valid which gave preferential treatment to that single port in admitting French and Spanish ships on equal terms with those owned by Americans? The treaty, they asseverated, was therefore unconstitutional and, even worse, impolitic, because we were unfitted and did not desire to incorporate into our delicately-balanced system peoples different in speech, faith, and customs from ourselves. They were, however, only mildly opposed to expansion; they were determined and captious in the interpretation of the Constitution. The party in power were avowedly expansionist; their retort was equally dialectic and vapid. The whole discussion would have been empty except for Pickering's contention that there existed no power to incorporate foreign territory into the United States, as was stipulated by the treaty. The House had resolved, 90 to 25, to provide the money and had appointed a committee on provisional government: the Senate ratified the treaty, 26 to 5.

What made the debates and action of Congress epochal was the Federalist contention that Thomas Jefferson as provisional and interim governor was nothing more or less than an American despot in succession to a Spanish tyrant. Where was the Constitution now; where would it be when in appointing the necessary officials – executive, judicial, and legislative – he would usurp not merely Spanish despotism but the powers of both the other branches of the federal government? The Republicans quibbled, too; to appoint these three classes of officials was not to exercise their powers. But they confirmed in unanswerable logic a distinction thus far only mooted in our political history – that between states and territories. Already presidential appointees were exercising all three powers in Mississippi and Indiana. This clenched the contentions of the Republicans, and the bill for provisional government passed by an overwhelming vote on October 31. Both parties throughout the struggle had tacitly abandoned the position that Congress possessed merely delegated powers and nothing further except the ability to carry them into effect. Both therefore admitted the possible interpretation of the Constitution under stress of necessity, and the Federalists in their quibbling contentions lost hold everywhere except in New England. That section saw its influence eclipsed by the preponderance of Southern and Western power and ere long was ripe for secession.

Volumes have been written and more will be on the romance of the Louisiana purchase; Josiah Quincy threatened the dismemberment of the Union when the present state of Louisiana was admitted in 1812; but for Jefferson's wisdom in exploration it might

have remained a wilderness long after settlement began; Great Britain coveted it in 1815 when Jackson saved it; Aaron Burr probably coveted an empire within it; Napoleon III had dreams of its return to the new France he was to found in Mexico. Excluding the Floridas, which Spain would not concede as a part of it, and the Oregon country, the territory thus acquired was greater than that of Great Britain, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy combined. Its agricultural and mineral resources were, humanly speaking, inexhaustible. No wonder it excited the cupidity as it stirred the imagination of mankind: no wonder if men avid to retain their power were dismayed at the preponderance it was sure to exert eventually in a federal union of states. At the present moment fourteen of our commonwealths, with a population of about 16,000,000 and a taxable wealth of seven billions occupy its soil. By the time we are fifty years older, at the present rate of settlement, these will contain about a third of the power in the Union as determined by numbers and prosperity. All of them, however, were never more than administrative districts, and by the retroactive influence of this fact state sovereignty has thus been made an empty phrase.

And this leads us to our final contention. If the Louisiana purchase revolutionized our national outlook, our constitutional attitude, and our sectional control, it has quite as radically changed our national texture. From that hour to this we have called to the masses of Europe for help to develop the wilderness, and they have come by millions, until now the men and women of Revolutionary stock probably number less than 15,000,000 in the entire country. These later Americans have, like the migrations of the Norsemen in central and southern Europe, proved so conservative in their Americanism that they outrun their predecessors in loyalty to its essentials. They made the Union as it now is, in a very high sense, and there is no question that in the throes of civil war it was their blood which flowed at least as freely as ours in defense of it. It is they who have kept us from developing on colonial lines and have made us a nation separate and apart. This it is which has prevented the powerful influence of Great Britain from inundating us, while simultaneously two English-speaking peoples have reacted one upon the other in their radical differences to keep aflame the zeal for exploration, beneficent occupation, and general exploitation of the globe in the interests of a high civilization. The localities of the Union have been stimulated into such activities that manufactures and agriculture have run a mighty race: commerce alone lags and no wonder, for Louisiana gave us a land world of our own, a home market more valuable than both the Indies or the continental mass of the east.

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THE TRANSFER

By Pierre-Clément de Laussat

The day, which was to be the first of a truly new era for the Mississippi shores, finally dawned. At ten-thirty, I saw myself surrounded at my house by all the municipal officials, the general staff, a great number of officers, and an even greater number of French citizens from all walks of life. With this retinue, I set out on foot toward the city hall.

The day was beautiful and the temperature as balmy as a day in May. Lovely ladies and city dandies graced all the balconies on the Place [d'Armes]. The Spanish officers could be distinguished in the crowd by their plumage. At none of the preceding ceremonies had there been such a throng of curious spectators. The eleven rooms of the city hall were filled with all the beautiful women of the city.

The Anglo-American [American only] troops at last appeared. Captain Costille, assigned to meet them at the [Tchoupitoulas] gate of the city, sent his aide-de-camp Traisnel to notify Major Vinache, the Place [d'Armes] commandant. The latter took my orders and had the troops enter. To the roll of drums they emerged in ranks down along the riverfront at the Place [d'Armes] and, facing the militia, which was standing with its back to the city hall, arranged themselves there in battle formation.

The commissioners Claiborne and Wilkinson were received at the foot of the stairs of the city hall by the major of engineers, Vinache; the commander of the militia, Livaudais; and the secretary of the French commission, Daugerot. I came forward to greet them, halfway across the meeting room. Claiborne seated himself in an armchair on my right and Wilkinson seated himself in another on my left. I announced the purpose of the ceremony. The commissioners presented their powers to me; their secretary read them aloud. Immediately after, I ordered to be read (1) the treaty of transfer, (2) my powers, and (3) the act of exchange of ratifications. Then I declared that I was transferring the country to the United States, repeating solemnly the terms in which my powers were conceived.

I handed over the keys to the city, tied together with tricolor ribbons, to M. Wilkinson and, immediately afterwards, I absolved from their oath of allegiance to France the inhabitants who chose to remain under the domination of the United States. The minutes were read, first in French by Daugerot, and then in English by Wadsworth. Both sides, together with the respective secretaries, affixed their signatures.

We moved to the main balcony of the city hall. As we appeared, the French colors were lowered and the American flag was raised. When they reached the same level, both banners paused for a moment. A cannon shot was the signal for salvos from the forts and the batteries.

Captain Charpin and his Company of French Citizens had stood at attention since morning as a guard of honor for the French flag. Their sergeant major, Legrand, came forward and received the French flag from the hands of the sub-lieutenant, Dusseuil, who had lowered it. Legrand draped it around himself like a sash and, escorted by two officers of the company with drawn swords, retired to his position in the middle of the company.

I came down from the balcony with the commissioners of the United States. Arriving midway in front of the troops of the militia, I said to them: «Members of the militia, you have given proof of zealous devotion to the French flag during the short time that it has just flown over these regions. The French Republic will be informed of it. I express my gratitude to you in the name of its government. As of this moment, you pass under the domination of the United States: they are now your sovereign. I turn your command over to their commissioners. Obey them as the representatives of the United States.» I joined the flag bearers, and we filed out of the square to the roll of drums.

The memory of that event will never leave me. Above all, what a spectacle it was, both solemn and touching, to see fifty French citizens brought together there. By diverse paths and hazards and of their own accord, they rallied there, some 2,500 leagues from their native land, to pay homage to the flag of their country! This standard, brought over to those regions for a long duration, this standard that for twelve years had never ceased to march onward and to spread afar the glory of France, was voluntarily withdrawing and retreating back upon Europe.

The company improvised there that day had borne arms in defense of its mother country since the beginning of the Revolution. Its soldiers had bearing and a military clip; they marched with precision, order, dignity, and a touching calm that left a striking impression on the spectators. More than one tear was shed at the moment when the flag disappeared from that shore. We withdrew, passing before the entire line of Anglo-American troops, who presented arms, and the flags and the officers, who saluted us.

Having retired to the reception hall of the prefecture, the soldiers deposited the flag. I told them that I would request their temporary commander to give me their names, which I would immediately send on to the First Consul. I concluded by inviting all of them together and each one individually to the festivities of that evening.

The militia officers, wearing the tricolor cockade, rushed in. Showing it to me, they said, «We are still wearing it as we present ourselves to you at this time; it will be eternally dear to us, as well as the memory of your brief sojourn in these regions.» There were tears in their eyes. I had steeled myself for the ordeals of this day, but I had not expected that one and consequently was not prepared for it. I mustered what little strength I had left to reply briefly and then fled to my office.

The celebration closed with a dinner and a *soirée* in which all society took part without distinction of Spaniards, Americans, or French-

men. We raised a solemn toast to the three nations and saluted them to the deafening noise of the cannons. We had hardly finished drinking coffee and other beverages when the dances began, in which the American women, whose charms we have not yet extolled, took part.

The drawing rooms were taken over by games of *écarté*, *braque*, chess, *bête*, *médiateur*, *bouillotte*, and after supper, *creps* [craps]. At one o'clock, supper was served. Twelve American officers, for whom I had asked permission to attend from their commanders, were present. Certainly, the banks of the Mississippi had never before seen any gathering or festivities so splendid and so lively. I could not begin to recount all the gracious remarks passed during those twenty-four hours and the expressions of interest and regret offered to us.

When I considered what I wanted to do and what I accomplished during my reign of twenty days, I was not dissatisfied. I could depart from these shores without fearing the remembrances I would leave behind. I have described fully and with satisfaction the circumstances of this double revolution that would create such marvelous changes in the destinies of a people of French origin in a vast country established and commended to the world by France. . .

Still another ball was held! This one moved me, since the city officials gave it in honor of my wife on the third of January. It was really beautiful, and the women had never been more elegant and fresh-looking in their finery. Four commissioners – Messrs. Boré; the mayor, Fortier; Faurie; and Derbigny – did the honors.

Halfway through the supper, a dove, perched upon a spray of roses, descended in front of my wife, seated at the table. It carried in its beak a note which read:

Portrait of Madame Laussat

You see combined in her
Virtues and attractions;
You see the Faithful portrait
Of her soul in her features;
Affable, sensible and good,
Virtuous without pride,
And beautiful without vanity;
Everything about her is charming.

We were the last to leave, toward six o'clock in the morning. It was very cold for the country, with abundant rainfall rapidly followed by a violent and icy north wind.

During the night of the eighth of January, an unfortunate potential for trouble broke out between the French and Anglo-Americans at the regular public hall. Two quadrilles, one French, the other English, formed at the same time. An American, taking offense at something, raised his walking stick at one of the fiddlers. Bedlam ensued. Claiborne remained quiet until Clark roused him. Unable to explain himself in French, Claiborne appeared embarrassed and weak; he yielded at first, then endeavored to reassert his authority. In the end, he resorted to persuasion rather than to rigorous measures in order to silence the American, who was a simple surgeon attached to the troops. The French quadrille resumed. The American interrupted it again with an English quadrille and took his place to dance. Someone cried, «If the women have a drop of French blood in their veins, they will not dance.» Within minutes, the hall was completely deserted by the women. The Marquis de Casacalvo, who was present, continued to

play cards, laughing up his sleeve. He had gumbo served to two or three women who came to him for protection, and he maliciously played his hand.

Claiborne spoke to me of the incident. «There you have a picture of the feelings that stir up people.» I replied, «See to it that they do not clash over things more serious and more important.» He retorted, «The people of Louisiana love France dearly; I get proofs of it all the time.» There is no doubt that they loved France. It would take the ablest of American statesmen to erase this fond predilection and a great display of kindness on the part of the new government.

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